



RIVER TOWN REVIEW

A Fresh Set of Eyes Helping to Enhance Tourism and Outdoor Recreation in Your Community



River Town Review Report for Madison, IN

River Town Review Team



NPS RTCA
RIVERS, TRAILS & CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
www.nps.gov/rtca

May 2022

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Executive Summary

To help enhance outdoor recreation opportunities and increase tourism, the City of Madison applied for assistance from the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, (RTCA). Along with eleven other river communities, Madison was selected to participate in the Ohio River Recreation Trail, “River Town Review” program. Through the program, a team of outdoor recreation professionals conducted a River Town Review for each community, which included an objective assessment of outdoor recreation facilities and potential, a workshop to facilitate community input, and ultimately, a series of community-specific recommendations. The River Town Review is intended to start communities on their way towards reaching their outdoor recreation potential while enhancing tourism, as well.

The review team found Madison to be well-positioned to take advantage not only of its location on the Ohio River, but its proximity to Louisville, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis, as well. In addition, Madison can promote the fact that Clifty Falls State Park, a regional destination, is right next door, and that its downtown features the largest contiguous National Historic Landmark District in the country. The city can also boast that three significant “long” trails - the coast-to-coast American Discovery Trail, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and Adventure Cycling’s Underground Railroad Route - all pass right through town.



Photo Credit: Cary Graham

As with all river town reviews, the process revealed both challenges and opportunities, and resulted in the development of the over thirty recommendations found in the body of this report. Notable items, along with brief comments, include:

- The perception of the Ohio as being polluted and dangerous, brought forth in the SWOT analysis, is a challenge but one that can be addressed by keeping the public well-informed, and involved, with readily available information and programs regarding water quality, and boating safety.
- Madison promotes its location on the Ohio but should also promote what visitors can do on the river. To enhance opportunities, an accessible canoe/kayak launch and transient docking facility should be pursued. The city can seek planning assistance for this essential facility through RTCA. Canoe and kayak rentals should be available, presenting an opportunity for a local business. Any expansion of the city's riverfront campground should include a primitive tent site area, catering to paddlers, cyclists, and hikers.
- Madison can place more promotional emphasis on the Ohio River Recreation Trail, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and the American Discovery Trail. Local businesses and attractions should be encouraged to place their information on each of the trails' excellent interactive maps and websites.
- The Underground Railroad's fascinating history, local sites, routes, and facilities could be marketed to a broader, nation-wide audience and become a major tourism draw for Madison.
- Madison, and its neighboring river communities, can benefit by strengthening the partnerships between them. The River Town reviews have shown that many challenges and opportunities are common to all the communities. Ideas can be shared, and some issues can potentially be addressed by working together.
- Madison can explore the concept of becoming a "Trail Town", a welcoming haven serving cyclists, paddlers, and hikers. The economic benefits to trail towns are very real, significant, and well documented.

All challenges and opportunities identified through the process, along with accompanying recommendations and resources, are presented in detail in Madison's complete River Town Review.



Introduction

The Ohio River Recreation Trail (ORRT)

The volunteer-led, Ohio River Recreation Trail Steering Committee is working to create a self-guided, 274-mile-long land and waterway trail, connecting people to opportunities for outdoor adventure, recreation, and discovery on and along the Ohio River. Stretching from Portsmouth, Ohio to West Point, Kentucky, the Ohio River Recreation Trail will serve to promote tourism, enhance economic development, and strengthen the connections between the communities it passes through. It will tell the story of the Valley's unique history and culture, while showcasing its natural beauty. By increasing environmental awareness and promoting a sense of stewardship towards this wonderful natural resource, the trail will give the Ohio River its own "voice", helping to ensure that it will provide benefits for generations to come. Please visit www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org.



ORRT Vision – The Ohio River is an accessible and welcoming recreation corridor with vibrant river towns connected by land and water trails.

ORRT Mission – To facilitate world-class outdoor adventure opportunities through partnerships that promote healthy recreation, education, stewardship, and economic development for Ohio River communities.

In a significant step towards realizing its vision and mission, the ORRT Steering Committee broadened its partnership with the [Ohio River Way](#), a 501 C3 Charitable Organization dedicated to connecting river corridor communities, improving recreational, ecological, cultural, and compatible commercial opportunities along the waterway, ensuring a healthy river and riparian corridor, and fostering a mindset of planning and stewardship. The Ohio River Way recently contracted with Human Nature, a Cincinnati-based landscape architecture and environmental planning firm, with extensive experience with trails, greenways, parks and preserves, and Kolar Design, a Cincinnati-based firm as well, specializing in building branded experiences and connecting people with places. The firms are working to develop new branding strategies for the Ohio River Recreation Trail, a series of themed trail experiences, plans for cohesive messaging and consistent signage, a membership structure to ensure a sustainable organization, and a blueprint for increased collaboration between states and communities.



OHIO RIVER
WAY

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)



NPS RTCA

RIVERS, TRAILS & CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

www.nps.gov/rtca

The [National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program](#) facilitates local conservation and outdoor recreation efforts around the country, helping communities develop or restore parks, rivers, and conservation areas, and create new and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities. In this case, the partnership of RTCA, the ORRT, and the Lewis and Clark Geo-tourism Project, worked to help Ohio River towns capture the benefits of outdoor recreation and tourism along the Ohio River. Utilizing the partners' combined experiences and skills, a free "River Town Review" was conducted for 12 Ohio River communities. The Review involved an objective assessment of each community's recreation resources and potential, the gathering of community input, and a summary of findings and recommendations. The communities, selected through an application process, included Madison, Lawrenceburg, Vevay, Aurora, Rising Sun, and as a group, Jeffersonville/Clarksville/New Albany, all in Indiana; West Point, Carrollton, Augusta, and Maysville, in Kentucky; and New Richmond, and Portsmouth, in Ohio. Upon completion of all 12 River Town Reviews, a Summary Report will be prepared and presented, including common and unique challenges, opportunities, ideas, and solutions, all illustrating the value of partnership and connections between Ohio River communities.

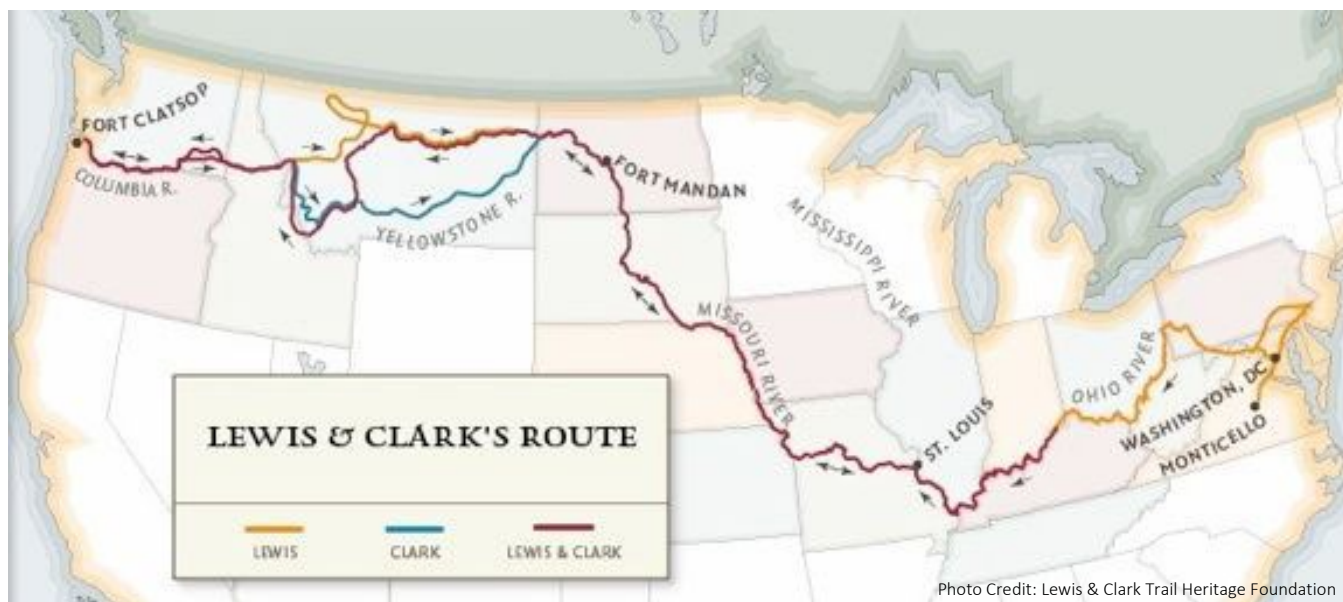


Photo Credit: NPS/LARO/Chelsea Brauner

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience

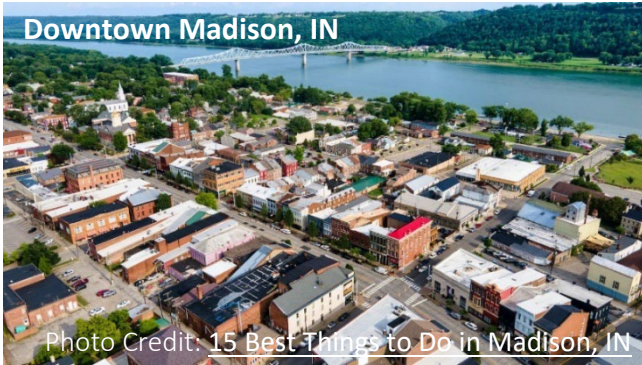


For almost 5,000 miles, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail follows the route of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Astoria, Oregon, travelling through 16 states and many communities along the Ohio River. Through an interactive map, the [Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience](#) helps people retrace the Expedition's route and explore local communities along the way. To help enhance tourism and the visitor experience, local communities and businesses can, and are encouraged to, add their information to the map, as well.



Madison's River Town Review

The River Town Review team, consisting of professional planners from RTCA, leaders from the ORRT and the Lewis and Clark Geo-tourism Project, along with volunteers from outdoor recreation groups, began their task by reviewing materials provided by Madison, and conducting online desktop reviews of the community's internet presence, relevant websites, and master planning efforts. Team members visited the community and developed objective impressions and suggestions for improvements. Due to covid restrictions, the team hosted a virtual,



instead of in-person, community input workshop on January 18, 2022. The workshop included a SWOT analysis, and a brainstorming session intended to generate ideas for the enhancement of outdoor recreation in Madison. Using the software program, Mural, team members led the participants through both exercises. Participants were also asked to provide short descriptions of their favorite places to take visitors while in Madison. The team used the community's input in creating the recommendations found in this report.

The Team's Desktop On-line Review

Internet Presence and Relevant Websites

Four volunteers completed Desk Top Online reviews of Madison's internet and social media presence, relevant, visitor-related websites, and the City's walkability and bikeability scores. Overall, Madison's presence on digital media was found to be strong. The team created the following summary of their findings and observations. Their suggestions are included along with others found later in this report, while details of the desktop reviews can be found in Appendix B.

Madison's City Government Website (www.madison-in.gov)

Madison's city government website has an attractive photo scroll on the homepage. Site navigation appeared to be easy and directed the user to related city services. Under the "Community" Tab, there are links to the "Visit Madison" website, as well as general information about outdoor recreation activities, and boating facilities on the Ohio River. A link to Fizz's Bike Shop was also included, featuring bike rental opportunities in Madison.

Overall Impression – this is a government website, well-designed for use by residents to interact and conduct business with the City of Madison.

Visit Madison (www.visitmadison.org)

This website is very attractive and inviting, with great pictures of the Ohio River, downtown Madison, and Clifty Falls State Park. The information on Rockin' Thunder River Tours certainly describes a unique service not found at other river towns along the Ohio.

The section on “Cycling Routes”, under the “Explore” Tab, is very impressive and unique. This could be a model for the Ohio River Recreation Trail, and other river towns, to follow. Very well done!

The “Madison Cultural District” map is excellent, and again, a good example for others to follow.

Other notable features include the tab on fishing and boating, as well as area camping opportunities and hiking trails. The website clearly tells the visitor that Madison is welcoming to folks who enjoy outdoor experiences.

Overall Impression – this website is well designed and visually appealing, giving the feeling that Madison is engaged and invested in attracting visitors. A team member remarked that it “made me want to go there.”

Madison Main Street Program (www.madisonmainstreet.com)

This site is appealing as well, with lots of great information on things to do in the downtown district, including, dining, the arts, shopping, and recreation, all with wonderful and engaging photos! The team was glad to see two river-related businesses identified – the Madison Lighthouse Restaurant, and Chillbilly Treats.

Overall Impression – attractive site with good information on things to do downtown.

Walkability & Bikeability Scores for Madison

Walk and Bike Score measures the walkability/bikeability of any address, using a patented system which analyzes hundreds of walking and biking routes to nearby amenities. Points are awarded based on the distance to amenities in each category.

- Walkability Score for Madison. **76 - Very Walkable. Most errands can be accomplished on foot.**
- Bikeability Score for Madison. **50 – Bikeable. Some bike infrastructure.**

Please visit www.walkscore.com for more information.

| Walk Score |
|-----------------------------|
| 90-100 Walkers Paradise |
| 70 -89 Very Walkable |
| 50 -69 Somewhat Walkable |
| 25 -49 Mostly Car Dependent |
| 0 – 24 Car Dependent |

| Bike Score |
|--------------------------|
| 90-100 Bikers Paradise |
| 70 -89 Very Bikeable |
| 50 -69 Bikeable |
| 0 - 49 Somewhat Bikeable |

Community Master Planning Efforts

A review of Madison, and Jefferson County master planning efforts, was also conducted, focusing on plan components related to outdoor recreation, pedestrian and bicycling issues, trail development and connectivity, boating and paddling access, and waterfront development. Significant plans currently in place include:

- One Madison Comprehensive Plan, 2016.
- Madison Active Transportation Plan, 2016.
- Madison Parks Department Master Plan, 2016.
- Envision Jefferson County Vision and Action Plan, 2015.

One Madison Comprehensive Plan

The One Madison Comprehensive Plan is a well-done, attractive, very readable document. Relevant to the River Town Review's focus, the plan addresses gateways and wayfinding, trail connectors and links, recreation and parks, the Heritage Trail, and the importance of Madison's waterfront. It recognizes its natural assets - the Ohio River and its wetlands, Clifty Falls State Park, and stresses the importance of planning for safe travel by pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the following specifics were noted:



- The Multi-Modal Transportation Goals #1 and #2 included the creation of an interconnected system of multi-use paths and green ways, and the support for regional trail and greenway development efforts.
- The Marina District was categorized as a “Targeted Re-development Area.”
- The Appendices included important and useful information regarding implementation strategies, guidelines for historic preservation, and funding resources.

Madison Active Transportation Plan

Again, a very well done, attractive and readable document. The introduction included an obvious, but not often thought of statement – “Transportation is likely the first thing visitors to Madison interact with.” As with the “One Madison” plan, the importance of trails and connections, and embracing pedestrians and cyclists, was emphasized. Relevant to our focus, noteworthy strategies included:

- Using the concept of “Complete Streets”, where streets are designed for multi-modal transportation, with vehicular, pedestrian, bike, and public transit traffic, all being addressed.
- In evaluating bikeability and walkability, the “Handlebar and Walking Survey”, was utilized, where small groups biked and walked, while recording specific areas of concern and difficulty.

Madison Parks Department Master Plan

This plan included many of the recommendations found in “One Madison”, and the Active Transportation plans, including the promotion of the Ohio River as a recreational asset, and the importance of implementing the Bike Pedestrian plan. In addition, the Plan put forth the following outdoor recreation-related goals:

- Expand the campground, encourage the installation of a zipline at Clifty Falls State Park, address the recreation amenity needs of the northside, explore the use of a “Quality of Life” Bond to fund park and recreation projects, and develop plans for Lanier Street, and the city’s riverfront.

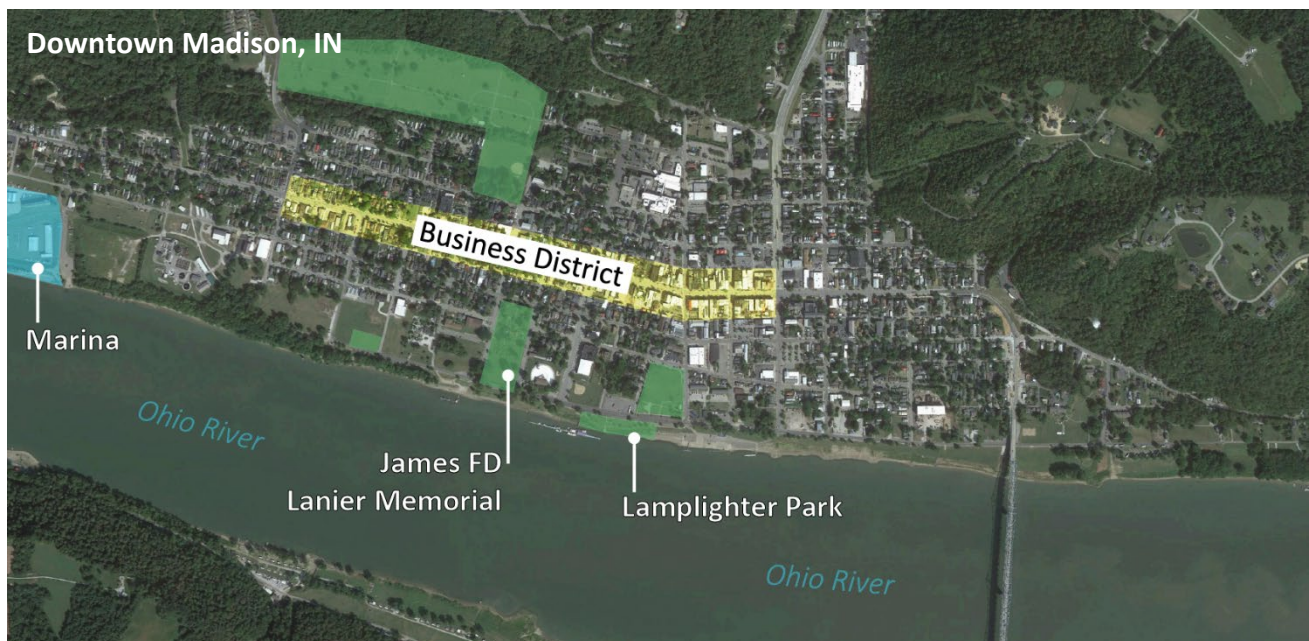
Envision Jefferson County Vision and Action Plan

The County’s Vision and Action Plan promotes and recognizes the vital connection between quality of life, a healthy economy, and the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities. Two particularly relevant items included:

- The provision of more recreational opportunities that utilize the Ohio River, was listed as a “Priority Action Item”.
- Residents’ input resulted in bike lanes and trails being listed as “Top 5 Priority Action Items”.

The Team’s Visit to Madison

To experience the community firsthand, members of the River Town Review Team visited Madison in early January of 2022. They found Madison to be a charming, historic, Ohio River town. Their visit resulted in an objective assessment of facilities, connections, and access. They developed suggestions for improvements and noted potential opportunities, which were then considered during the development of the “Recommendations” section of this report. Following is a summary of their visit.



Observations and Initial Assessments

River Connections and Access

Access to the river is excellent, with greenspace and parks along much of the city's riverfront. The heart of downtown Madison is Main Street, with shops and businesses just a short walk from the Ohio River and numerous river-front park areas along West Vaughn Drive. The connection between downtown and the river is an easy and enjoyable 5-minute walk. Along West Vaughn Drive, a mile of paved walkways parallels the river, with restrooms, playgrounds, athletic facilities, and a public swimming pool that includes the historic Crystal Beach Pool House, built in 1938.



From the perspective of transient boaters and paddlers, access from the river to the parks and downtown appeared to be straightforward, with a kiosk and wayfinding map providing quick information about downtown.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Team members found downtown Madison to be very walkable, with a full complement of sidewalks, crosswalks, and ADA curb cuts. Main Street has extra-wide sidewalks, interpretive signage, and trash receptacles.

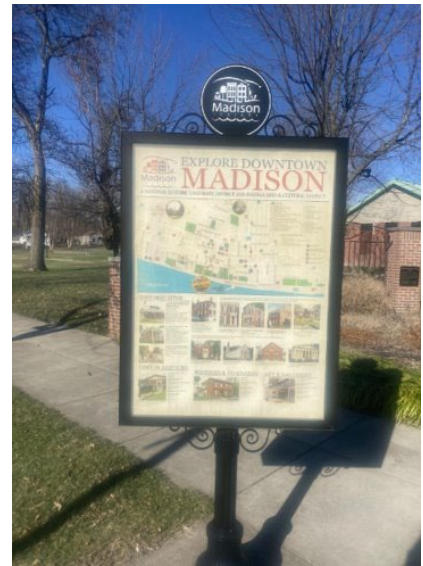
With mostly slow-moving traffic in the downtown area, bicycling on the streets should be a comfortable experience for most riders. Though Main Street does include designated bike lanes, the team did not see additional bike support facilities such as signage for bike lanes, or bike racks.



Signage, Wayfinding, and Site Amenities

The interpretive signage found throughout downtown Madison and its parks made a positive impression on the team. They found a plethora of signage, markers, and plaques, many with fun facts and highlights of the community’s history. The team also noted that metal utilities cabinets, usually steel gray in color, had been covered with colorful, painted murals – a pleasant and unique surprise!

Overall signage in the downtown area was found to be consistent and not over-bearing. Streetscape amenities, such as streetlights, signposts, utility poles, flag holders and event banners, were tasteful and in relatively good repair, though some are showing their age.



Parking

The team found ample parking throughout the downtown area, including off-street parking, as well.

The Virtual Workshop

The River Town Review Team hosted and facilitated a Virtual Workshop for Madison, on January 18th, 2022. Twelve community representatives participated in the workshop, which began with presentations on the Ohio River Recreation Trail, The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience, and the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. The team’s Desktop Online Review and Community Visit were reviewed, as well. Team members then facilitated a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, Analysis, (SWOT), followed by a Brainstorming Session for the generation and prioritization of ideas. Workshop participants shared their thoughts during both exercises, by entering their ideas on Post-It-Notes via Mural interactive software. In addition, the participants prioritized the items generated, by voting for three in each category. The participants’ involvement in the process was positive and energetic, leading one team member to remark that they “had never seen so many Post-It-Notes generated”. Participants were also invited to describe their favorite places in Madison, and what would constitute the “perfect day” for a visitor to their community.

Along with the information gathered through the Online Desktop Review and Community Visit, the input provided through the virtual workshop gave the River Town Review Team a better understanding of what is important to, and special about, Madison, and the challenges and opportunities that are present. The process helped the team develop targeted recommendations for Madison.

Weaknesses

- Not enough active transportation routes and bike paths.
- Lack of canoe, kayak, and boat rental operations.
- Little diversity of activities.
- Hospitality workers are not well-informed regarding local outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Lack of bike trail connections with other river towns.
- No shoulders for biking on roadways.
- Litter and debris along riverfront.
- Town/County divide.
- Lack of communication between groups.
- Limited manpower available to complete projects.
- Lack of public transportation.
- Inconsistent business hours for retail, restaurant, and attractions.
- Potential for unsafe interactions on Main Street between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Opportunities

- Multi-use regional trail connections to Vevay and Hanover, and to Louisville and Cincinnati.
- Create “Madison Outdoors” section in Visit Madison website.
- Good market for outdoor adventure gear shop.
- Encourage development of canoe, kayak and paddleboard rental and retail business.
- Develop plan for future use of Clifty Creek Power Plant site.
- City-owned and operated pontoon boat tour operation.
- Potential for railroad tourism, including a dinner train.
- Opportunities for new hotel development.
- Development of an Ohio River Visitor Center.
- Work with Ivy Tech and public schools to enhance the local commitment to the Ohio River.
- Develop an Ohio River “Rest Area” for paddlers.

Threats

- The perception of the Ohio River as polluted and dangerous.
- Inconsistencies in customer service.
- Young people leaving the area.
- Perception of Madison as a retirement community.
- The lack of manpower and energy needed to move forward.
- Political agendas.
- Over-commercialization.
- Town is isolated from county.
- Climate variability.
- Negativity of leaders.
- River debris after flooding.
- Economic uncertainty. Companies relocating to other areas.

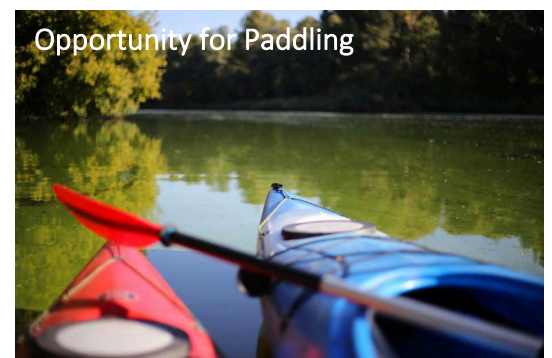
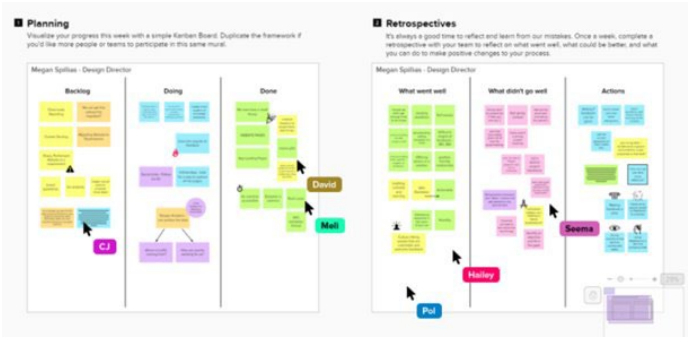


Photo Credit: [Canoe in Indiana? \(visitindiana.com\)](http://www.visitindiana.com)

Brainstorming Session

Upon completion of the SWOT analysis, workshop participants were led through a brainstorming session to generate ideas for the enhancement of outdoor recreation and tourism in and around Madison. The ideas generated were once again entered on Post-It-Notes through Mural interactive software and prioritized by a vote for three short-term and three long-term action items. A complete listing of the ideas generated can be found in Appendix B.



Short Term – First 3 Years.

- Develop a canoe/kayak launch facility.
- Establish a high school/college group like Cincinnati's "Adventure Crew".
- Engage the next generation by performing a SWOT Analysis, and Brainstorming Session, involving "Twenty-Somethings".
- Develop a Tour Guide/Ambassador Certification program.
- Apply for an additional RTCA Grant to facilitate development of outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Re-open the bowling alley – "we all miss it."
- Install more bike racks.
- Promote participation in Adventure Cycling's Underground Railroad Route.
- Targeted marketing campaign geared towards outdoor recreation and watersports groups.
- Take advantage of the American Discovery Trail's passage through Madison.
- Emphasize the benefits of nearby National Park Service resources and visitors.
- Improve existing signage, and add new signage where needed, for the Ohio River Byway, all area trails, and along the riverfront for transient boaters and paddlers.
- Recruit more watersport businesses for downtown.



Long Term – 3 to 10 Years

- Have a plan in place for use of the Clifty Creek Power Plant site upon its eventual closure. Develop support for its purchase and inclusion in the state park.
- Develop dedicated bike trails from Madison to Louisville and Cincinnati.
- Encourage a business to provide houseboat and pontoon boat rentals and cruises.
- Improve riverfront park assets and expand paved walkway.
- Plan for bike and paddle-specific campsites.
- Upgrade Heritage Trail surface.
- Enhance and promote Underground Railroad assets for outdoor recreation.
- Expand partnerships with Milton.
- Explore the potential for a zipline from Milton Hill to riverfront.
- Pursue an outdoor adventure/gear business.

Recommendations and Relevant Resources for Madison

The City of Madison participated in the River Town Review process to help reach its potential as a river town destination, in part by enhancing its outdoor recreation opportunities. To that end, the River Town Review team, using its expertise, and the community's input, developed the following recommendations for immediate, short, and long-term actions. Many of these can be undertaken immediately. For convenience, relevant resources are included with most of the recommendations. Communities are also encouraged to take advantage of the additional resources found in Section F. These may prove to be useful in further addressing the recommendations below, and may lead to new options and ideas, as well.

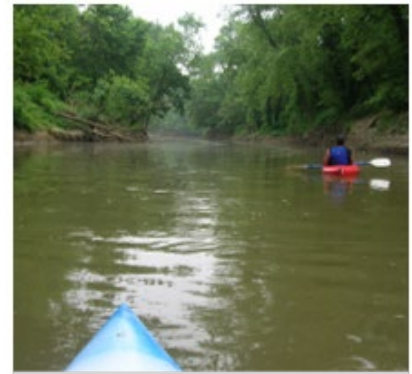
Recommendations:

Immediate Action Items

- Discuss Madison's River Town Review with elected officials, business leaders, outdoor recreation and tourism advocates, and residents. A pop-up event or group walk may be an effective strategy.
- Evaluate the River Town Review's priority SWOT Analysis and Brainstorming Session ideas to identify possible additional immediate action items.
- Lead a proactive campaign with local businesses, services, special events, and attractions to update and/or add their information to the Ohio River Recreation Trail, (ORRT) "[Digital Guide](#)" and to the [Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Experience's interactive map](#).
- Add the ORRT link (www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org) to all relevant websites and social media platforms, to promote the Ohio River Corridor as an outdoor recreation destination.
- If not already, become partners with the ORRT (www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/become-a-partner/), the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail (www.lewisandclark.travel/partner-community-program/), and the American Discovery Trail (www.discoverytrail.org).
- Strongly consider becoming a "Trail Town", a safe and welcoming haven with services for hikers, paddlers, and cyclists, and that provides very real, and well-documented, economic benefits to the community. Though a long-term endeavor, the team recommends an initial review of the following resources and inspiring examples.
 - **Huron River Water Trail** (www.huronriverwatertrail.org) Great example of, and an excellent promotional site for five river trail towns in Michigan.
 - **The Trail Town Program** (www.trailtowns.org/guide) Trail town development guide with excellent economic/tourism enhancement statistics.
 - **Rails to Trails Conservancy** (www.railstotrails.org/resources-library/resources/the-trail-town-guide/) Comprehensive trail town development step by step guide/toolkits.
- Market and promote not only Madison's prime location on the Ohio, but also what residents and visitors can do on the river. Showcase river-oriented businesses, boating access, fueling, and docking facilities, paddling opportunities, and riverside walkways/trails. Market directly to watersports groups.



- Continue to promote Madison’s downtown as the largest contiguous National Historic Landmark District in the nation. The district’s 133 blocks and 1600 buildings are an incredible asset and would be attractive to boaters, paddlers, cyclists, and hikers.
- An equally incredible asset is nearby Clifty Falls State Park. Continue to promote the park not only as a spectacular, family-friendly destination, but as an opportunity for advanced hikers, as well.
- Strive to have all tourism-related information available for download online, instead of having to be picked up in person.
- Utilize the photographs taken by local professional photographers in future marketing efforts during their visit to Madison, in future marketing efforts.
- As suggested during the workshop, Madison should seek the input of young and diverse groups, perhaps by facilitating a version of the River Town Review’s SWOT analysis and brainstorming session for those demographics. A local college or university may be willing to be involved and provide resources and an appropriate venue.
- Encourage implementation of the city’s Active Transportation Plan.
- Promote and provide support for existing regional trails and trail planning efforts, including the Next Level Trail Project, (NLT), connecting Madison, Clifty Falls State Park, and Hanover.
- Promote the Heritage Trail as being part of the 6,800 mile long [American Discovery Trail](#), the first non-motorized, coast to coast trail, travelling from Delaware to California, and right through Madison. (A Brainstorming Session item.)
- The perception of the Ohio River as being polluted and unsafe, was identified as a “Threat” in Madison’s and many of the community SWOT analysis. Towns can begin addressing this immediately by keeping the public well-informed by providing readily available and current information through social media regarding water quality, river conditions, and safe boating and swimming practices. Educational programs are also available to increase awareness and help foster a sense of stewardship towards the river. The following resources are available to help address this issue.
 - [ORRT Safety Tips, and Safety Guide](#). Good review of the basics of boating safely on the Ohio. Current weather and forecast, river stage and velocity, safety equipment checklist, US Coast Guard Float Plan, and lock, dam, and Coast Guard contacts.
 - [The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission](#). Current “safe swimming” information during recreation season, regarding contact bacteria levels, harmful algae blooms. Weekly water quality reports, monthly “Ohio River Discussions” webinar series, and annual River Sweep information, as well.
 - [The Foundation for Ohio River Education, \(FORE\)](#). Teaches people of all ages to become environmental stewards through student and teacher programs, community events, and volunteer water quality monitoring programs.
- Increase promotion of Madison’s significant Underground Railroad history and sites. The National Park Service’s Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program offers background information and an excellent [promotional toolkit](#). In addition, market Adventure Cycling’s Underground Railroad Route, which travels from Mobile, Alabama to Owen Sound, Ontario, passing right through Madison. This was listed as a short- term action item in Madison’s workshop. Information at [adventurecycling.org](#). Marketed nation-wide, the Underground Railroad can become a major tourism draw.



Encourage local business to seek a Bike-Friendly Business designation through the [American League of Bicyclists](#). The League is also an excellent resource for improving cycling opportunities in your community.

Short Term – First 3 Years

- Discover ways to enhance Madison’s Bikeability by using [the EPA’s bikeability assessment and checklist](#), a combination of survey/assessment, and resources. A very good introduction and tool to improve cycling in your town.
- Additionally, become more welcoming to the cycling community by considering the following:
 - Ensure that there are adequate bike racks near service facilities. Designs and examples can be found at [www.cyclesafe.com/bike-parking-dimensions/](#).
 - Bike repair stations are greatly appreciated. [www.theparkcatalog.com/bike-repair-stand/](#).
 - Provide bike storage lockers. [www.cyclesafe.com/product-category/bike-lockers/](#)
 - Consider installing charging stations for E-Bikes. [Swift Mile](#) is a company that provides charging stations for communities, which are funded through advertising.
 - Provide signage and connections to the bike routes promoted on [www.visitmadison.com](#).
- Enhance Madison’s Walkability as well by accessing the resources at [America Walks](#). Excellent background information, benefits of walkability, and technical assistance to improve a community’s pedestrian access at no charge.
- The Parks Department’s Master Plan calls for expanding the city’s campground. A primitive tent site area for paddlers, cyclists, and hikers, should be included and prioritized. (Recommended during Madison’s workshop.) [Adventure Cycling Association's Guide to Bicycle Camping](#) is a good introduction to meeting the needs of non-motorized travelers.
- An interesting example of an “in town”, primitive campground, is the [Up the Creek Campground](#), in Moab, Utah. Paddler/cyclist/hiker-friendly, tent-only campground located a short walk from the downtown district.
- Begin planning for a true kayak launch and transient docking facility as a National Park Service/RTCA project. To apply for technical planning assistance, visit RTCA’s website at [www.nps.gov/rtca](#). This was the number one ranked short-term item in Madison’s workshop brainstorming session. In addition, explore the potential of including an accessible fishing pier in conjunction with this project, or at another location in the community. In the meantime, look at providing lockable storage facilities for paddlers and kayaks ([www.shopsoundboatworks.com](#)).

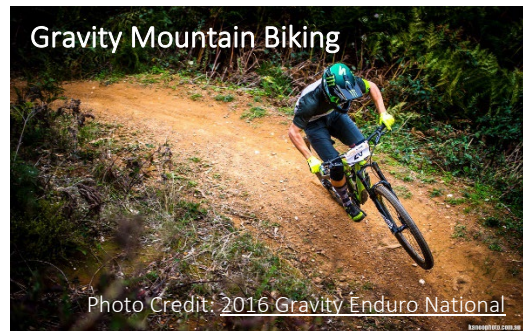


- An innovative community-run, kayak storage program can be found at www.tarrytownenvironmental.org/store-your-kayak-here/.
- Solicit vendors to provide seasonal canoe and kayak rentals. This may be an opportunity for Madison’s Parks Department as well. Soliciting a new outdoor gear shop, (suggested during the workshop), who may be interested in providing this service, is another option. A good example of a successful local gear shop and its relationship with a trail town, can be found in Milford, Ohio, just east of Cincinnati. www.roadsriversandtrails.com/the-best-trail-town/.
- Since many tourists desire to travel with their dogs, promote and encourage pet friendly businesses. State tourism departments are beginning to actively promote these opportunities, as well. River towns can help through the provision of dog parks, (an inexpensive, great “bang-for-the-buck” project), and through hiking-with-pets programs. An excellent article can be found at www.thebark.com/content/states-go-all-boost-their-dog-friendly-tourism-attractions/.
- Park facilities along the waterfront and West Vaughn Drive are incredible assets for the community. A long-term plan for their continued maintenance and upgrade should be developed.
- Stronger partnerships with other river towns were suggested often during River Town Review workshops. In Madison’s case, a stronger partnership with Milton was specifically mentioned. The two communities already share a wonderful connection in the Bridge Walkway. In addition, Madison and the river towns of Carrollton, Kentucky, Vevay, Rising Sun, Aurora, and Lawrenceburg, together provide an opportunity for connections and partnerships for 60 miles heading towards Cincinnati. Opportunities exist for paddling and cycling trail connections. The six river towns could form a regional tourism organization and jointly market their communities’ outdoor recreation and tourism resources.
- The perception that hospitality and tourism workers are not well-informed regarding local outdoor recreation opportunities was mentioned as a “weakness” during the workshop. Perhaps Visit Madison could offer an annual outreach and update program for these workers.
- Paddle and peddle events should be planned to showcase the area’s outdoor recreation opportunities. This could be done in conjunction with Milton and nearby river towns.



Long Term 3 – 10 Years

- The Ohio River and its tributaries offer plenty of opportunities for water trail development. The following resources will be invaluable in starting the planning process and developing access and launch sites for carry-in watercraft. Good access facilities will attract paddlers.
 - [The National Park Service River Access Planning Guide](#).
 - [The River Management Society](#). Links to the RMS/NPS/RTCA “Prepare to Launch” guide for assessing, designing, and building launch sites, along with economic impacts, best management practices, and a toolkit.
 - [Paddling.com](#). Good resources and a way to connect with the paddling community. Also, a nation-wide interactive map and app for paddling opportunities.
 - [EZ Dock](#). Examples of accessible kayak launch systems and docks.
- Work with the International [Mountain Bike Association](#), (IMBA), to explore the opportunities for potential trail development. IMBA is the source for trail planning and design, “Trail Labs” workshops, toolkits, advocacy, and economic impact data. The area’s terrain and significant elevation changes may also be ideal for a bike gravity park. Basic information can be found at www.diymountainbike.com/what-gravity-mountain-biking.
- The number one ranked long-term item brought forth in the workshop was to have a plan in place for the eventual closing of the Clifty Creek Power Plant. The review team agrees. Workshop participants recommended that the site be purchased and transferred to the State as part of Clifty Falls State Park, certainly a good use of the waterfront property.
- Madison can increase recreation-based tourism by reaching underserved markets, in part through marketing, but by ensuring that facilities and services are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive, as well. The following resources contain excellent information regarding recreation participation trends, inclusion in the outdoors, and underserved markets.
 - National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA), [2020 Engagement with Parks Report](#). Excellent resource for parks and recreation participation, identifying and reaching underserved markets.
 - [Headwaters Economics](#). “Inspiring the Future Outdoor Recreation Economy, 2021”. Well-done, attractive, and effective report/booklet.
 - [“Five Steps to Make the Outdoors More Inclusive”](#), each with action items.
 - [Outdoor Afro](#) & [Latin Outdoors](#), two national leadership organizations promoting inclusion and equity in the outdoors.
 - [American Canoe Association](#). Promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity in paddling.
 - The Safe Spaces Initiative, [National Wildlife Federation](#). Making the outdoors a safe and comfortable place for all.
 - [People for Bikes](#). Advocacy group helping to get more people biking.



Madison Area Classic Trip Opportunities

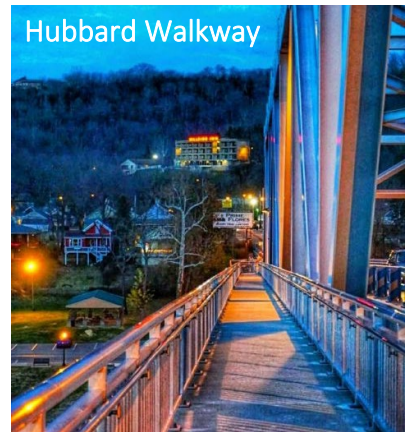
Classic trip opportunities can make a community stand out among others, drawing visitors who may then take advantage of what else the area offers. Madison’s location and history presents the following special opportunities:

Explore the rugged canyons and spectacular waterfalls of nearby **Clifty Falls State Park**. The park offers an extensive system of trails for all abilities, from easy to difficult. Camping is available, as well.



Head up the Ohio River for a day tour on one of **Rockin’ Thunder’s Jet Boats**, or sign up for their 2-day, 155-mile-long adventure through the steep hills along the Kentucky River all the way to Frankfort.

Cycle or walk through the nation’s largest contiguous **National Historic Landmark District**.



Bring binoculars and visit the **Big Oak National Wildlife Refuge**, a designated “Globally Important Bird Area”.

Cyclists can take advantage of the excellent **trail system** in Madison and the 4 loop rides outlined on [Visit Madison’s website](#). One of the rides passes through a ghost town.

Catch sunrise and sunset over the Ohio River from **the Harlan and Hanna Hubbard Walkway** along the Madison/Milton Bridge.



Additional Resources for Your Community

Many relevant resources were included with the recommendations for your community. However, there are many more available to river towns as they begin working to enhance outdoor recreation and tourism. The following list is by no means all-encompassing but contains additional and valuable information that may be useful in completing this review's recommendations but may result in the generation of new ideas as well.

Trail Towns

1. Outdoor Towns: [Toolkit](#) and [Resource Library](#)
2. [Kitsap Peninsula Water Trails Paddle Routes – Kitsap Peninsula Water Trails](#)
3. [Mon River Towns](#). Another excellent informational and promotional site highlighting fifteen river trail towns along the Monongahela River in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Includes “Fly Over the Mon”, a video drone tour.
4. [American Trails](#). Great definition and description of a “Trail Town”.
5. [Pennsylvania Environmental Council's River Town Program](#)
6. [River Towns Program | Susquehanna Greenway](#)
7. [RiverTowns Program — Tennessee RiverLine](#)
8. [Kentucky Trail Towns Guide & Workbook, Kentucky Trail Towns v1.0, Kentucky Trail Town Program Workbook](#)
9. [Destinations International – Variables Workbook](#). Good, online, objective, self-assessment tool for communities.
10. Basic article describing glamping. May be an opportunity for trail towns. [Glamping Is 2020's Hottest Travel Trend](#)

Water Quality and River Safety

1. U.S. Geological Survey, [USGS Current Water Data for the Nation](#).
2. U.S. Geological Survey [USGS Mobile Water Data](#).
3. [NOAA Live River Forecasts](#)
4. [Ohio Clean Marina and Boater Program](#). Educational programs, best management practices for marinas, clean boater, and marina designations.
5. [Indiana Clean Marina Guidebook](#). Good resource for marina owners, boatyards, and boat clubs.
6. United States Army Corps of Engineers. Good resource for water quality and safety, and recreational use of the Ohio River. Huntington District (www.lch.usace.army.mil), Louisville District (www.lrl.usace.army.mil).
7. [ACA Florida environmental awareness and protection toolkit for paddlers](#)
8. [“Life Below the Waterline”](#), a 2,000-gallon mobile aquarium, showcases the diversity of aquatic life in the Ohio.
9. [The River Network](#). “Waste in Our Waters. A Community Toolkit for Aquatic Litter Removal.”

Community Walkability and Bikeability

1. [Walkability Score](#)
2. [Bikeability Score](#)

3. [National Walkability Index](#)
4. [America Walks](#). Pedestrian advocacy, and great resource for improving walkability and its benefits, and technical assistance to communities at no charge.
5. [The League of American Cyclists](#). Founded in 1880(!), provides guidance for communities and businesses to enhance and embrace the cycling community. Bike-friendly community, business, and university designation programs. An excellent resource for improving cycling.
6. [Walkability Assessment Tool | Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware](#)
7. Indiana [INDOT: Bicycle & Pedestrian Program](#)
8. Kentucky [Bike Walk Kentucky | KYTC](#)
9. Ohio [Bike & Walk | Ohio Department of Transportation](#)
10. [Bike Repair Stations and Bike Pump Stations | Duo-Gard](#)
11. [Bollard Post Bike Racks – Park Warehouse](#)
12. Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, [Bike Parking Guidelines](#).

Cycling, Hiking, Land, and Water Trails

1. International Mountain Bicycling Association [Trail Accelerator Grants | IMBA](#)
2. [U.S. Bicycle Route System](#)
3. [Indiana Bicycle Suitability Map](#)
4. [Kentucky Bike Routes](#)
5. [Ohio US Bike Routes](#)
6. [Long Distance Cycling Routes: Economic Impacts, Best Practices, and Marketing Strategies](#)
7. [Bike Gravity Park Information](#).
8. [Warm Showers](#). Hospitality-sharing site for touring cyclists.
9. [Strava Global Heatmap](#)
10. [Map Line Heat Maps](#)
11. [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#). Excellent basic trail design and building toolkits.
12. [American Hiking Society](#). Trail advocacy, local trail building and maintenance.
13. [Hoosier Hikers Council](#). Trail building, maintenance, mapping.
14. [Tri-State Trails](#). Alliance of community advocates working to advance the region’s trails and bikeways.
15. [American Trails](#). Trail design, building and maintenance resource. Trail advocacy and training programs. Trail Town Guide.
16. [Louisville Loop](#). Proposed, partially completed, 100-mile trail connecting parks and neighborhoods in Louisville. [Cincinnati Crown](#). Regional loop surrounding Cincinnati.
17. [Ohio Horseman’s Council](#). Good source for equestrian trail design and maintenance, and partnership-building.
18. [Ohio Department of Natural Resources development and designation guide for water trails](#).
19. [Indiana DNR information on water trails and excellent “Where to Paddle”, map and app](#).
20. [Paddling.com](#). Good resources and a way to connect with the paddling community. Also, a nation-wide interactive map and app for paddling opportunities.

Sustainable Tourism

1. [The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable Rural Economic Development Toolkit](#). Very good toolkit.
2. [Solimar International](#)
3. [Global Sustainable Tourism Council](#)

4. [Adventure Travel Trade Association](#). This may be a great resource for river-based project development.
5. [Geo-tourism Toolkit](#). Re-imagining tourism.
6. [United Nations World Travel Organization](#)
7. [The Travel Foundation](#)
8. [Invisible Burden](#)
9. [World Travel and Tourism Council](#)
10. [National Recreation & Park Association Agency Performance Review](#) . Very good for benchmarking.
11. [Promotion of collaborative stewardship of destination tourism assets](#).
12. [Innovative and Promising Practices in Sustainable Tourism](#) (viu.ca)
13. [Ten Principles for Responsible Tourism](#) (Urban Land 2015)
14. [Tools and Resources for Nature-Based Tourism](#) World Bank.
15. [Pandemic Toolkit](#) (PlaceMakers.com)
16. [Arts and Transportation Rapid Response](#). Creative solutions to COVID-related transportation challenges.
17. [How Can Destinations Resume Tourism After the Pandemic While Ensuring Sustainability?](#) (PlaceBrandObserver.com)

Maintaining Small Town Character

1. [Smart Growth Principles – Smart Growth Online](#)
2. [Smart Growth Principles – Vermont Natural Resources Council \(vnrc.org\)](#)
3. [Smart Growth in Small Towns and Rural Communities | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)
4. [Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities & Towns](#)
5. [National Main Street Program](#) Great program. Also mainstreetonlinetool.org, specifically for small businesses.
6. [The Walkable Communities Library](#).
7. [New Designs for Growth, Development Guidebook](#).
8. [Kentucky Main Street Program – Kentucky Heritage Council](#) (heritage.ky.gov)
9. [Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts](#) (heritage.ky.gov)
10. [Project for Public Spaces](#) [The Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Transformation of Public Spaces](#) [Creative Exchange for the Arts](#) [Toolkits for Change Archives – Creative Exchange](#)
15. [Finding Nature News, Nature Blog | Children and Nature Network](#) (childrenandnature.org)
16. [Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights bring leaders, residents together – Children and Nature Network](#)
17. [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#). Very relevant resources.
18. [National Association of Preservation Commissions](#). Preservation professionals group providing forums, advocacy, and training programs.
19. [Portsmouth Murals](#). Example of turning floodwalls into works of art.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

1. [GRANTS.GOV](#)
2. [Economic Development Integration](#)
3. [U.S. Department of Transportation Transit, Highway, and Safety Funds – Funding – Bicycle and Pedestrian Program – Environment](#) Major funding source.
4. [Access + Stewardship Grants | onX Maps](#)

5. [Office of Small Business Development Centers Resources](#)
6. [Keep America Beautiful](#)
7. [Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)
8. [Community Impact | Waste Management \(wm.com\)](#)
9. [Online Funding Tool | Play and Recreation Funds Grant searches.](#)
10. [Grant Opportunities, Fundraising Resources, Funding | National Recreation and Park Association](#)
11. [Recreational Trails Program Project Database](#)
12. [Thrive Outside – Outdoor Industry Association](#)
13. [Bicycles and Pedestrians | US Department of Transportation](#)
14. [Citizens Institute on Rural Design](#)
15. [Save America’s Treasures \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#) Cultural and historic preservation grants.
16. [Equitable Funding Hub | City Parks Alliance](#)
17. [Funding Parks and Trails Through Land Trust Partnerships | City Parks Alliance](#)
18. [Community Change Grants | AmericaWalks.org](#)
19. [Mini-grants | Celebrate Urban Birds](#)
20. [Six Unique Trail Funding Solutions – American Trails](#)
21. [State and Local Grant Funding – Land and Water Conservation Fund \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#) (LWCF).
22. Kentucky [Kentucky DLG – LWCF Grants](#)
23. [Ohio DNR](#). One-stop shopping for Ohio grant information on trails, boating facilities, paddling facilities, education, boat sanitary pump outs, and LWCF.
24. [Indiana DNR Outdoor Recreation Grants](#). Information on LWCF, Indiana Trails Program, and Next Level Trails, (focusing on collaborative trail connections).
25. [Every Kid Outdoors](#). Program aimed at 4th graders and their families, with free admission to federal parks and facilities.
26. [www.fws.gov/wsfrprograms/subpages/grantprograms](#). Information on Boating Infrastructure, and Clean Vessel Act, (sanitary boat pumpouts), grants.
27. [Appalachian Regional Commission grant programs](#). Appalachian Regional Commission grant programs.

Organizations and Trade Associations

1. [Adventure Cycling Association](#)
2. [American Trails](#) Policy, advocacy, training programs, webinars.
3. [American Rivers](#)
4. [American Canoe Association](#)
5. [State Outdoor Business Alliance \(SOBAN\)](#).
6. [City Parks Alliance](#)
7. [International Journal of Wilderness](#)
8. [National Recreation and Parks Association](#) For park and recreation professionals, local board members.
9. [River Management Society](#) Supports professionals helping to protect and manage America’s rivers.
10. [River Network](#) Helping local communities protect their water resources.
11. [Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals](#)
12. [Ohio Parks and Recreation Association.](#)
11. [Indiana Parks and Recreation Association.](#)
12. [Kentucky Recreation and Parks Society.](#)

13. [Partnership for the National Trails System](#). Helps connect not-for-profit trail organizations with Federal agency partners. Training programs.
14. [National Association of City Transportation Officials](#).
15. [American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials](#). Excellent guidebooks related to bicycle and pedestrian design.
16. [Outdoor Industry Association](#). Advocacy, Economic impact research. “Thrive Outside” inclusion program.
17. [National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds](#). Educational resources, including the National School of RV Park and Campground Management School.
18. [The National Park Service’s very comprehensive guide to campground design](#)
19. [Association of Marina Industries \(AMI\)](#). Training, programs, financial planning/trends, advocacy.

Community Assistance Programs

1. National Park Service

a. [Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program \(RTCA\)](#)

- A national network of conservation and recreation planning professionals that partner with community groups, nonprofits, tribes, and state and local governments to design trails and parks, to serve and improve access to rivers, protect special places, and create outdoor recreation opportunities
- Free technical planning assistance is available for Communities and non-profit organizations through an application process
- [Directory of National Park Service Community Assistance Programs](#)



2. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

a. [Smart Growth Technical Assistance Programs | Smart Growth | US EPA](#)

- Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities
- Cool & Connected
- Governor’s Institute on Community Design
- Greening Americas Communities
- Healthy Places for Health People
- Local Foods, Local Places
- Recreation Economy for Rural Communities
- Smart Growth Implementation Assistance
- Smart Growth Implementation Assistance for Costal Communities
- Special Smart Growth Technical Assistance Projects
- [Environmental Justice Grants, Funding and Technical Assistance](#)



3. US Forest Service

a. Shared Stewardship Programs

- Forest Legacy
- Forest Stewardship
- Community Forest
- Ecosystem Markets
- Wood Innovation



- Urban and Community Forestry
- Forest Health Protection
- Landscape Scale Restoration
- Forest Taxation and Estate Planning

[How the Forest Stewardship Program Works | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

4. US Fish & Wildlife Service

- a. Division of Partner & Intergovernmental Affairs
- Rural Fire Assistance
 - Small Wetlands Program
 - Landscape Conservation Design
 - Several other programs are available.

[USFWS – Division of Partner and Intergovernmental Affairs](#)



5. National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

- a. Active Programs
- Acres for America
 - Bring Back the Natives
 - Conservation Partners Program
 - Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program
 - National Coastal Resilience Fund
 - Resilient Communities Program
 - Bats for the Future Fund
 - Monarch Butterfly & Pollinators Conservation Fund

[Programs | NFWF.org](#)



6. US Department of Agriculture

- a. Resources Conservation Service
- [Technical Assistance | NRCS \(usda.gov\)](#)
- b. Rural Development Programs & Services
- [Programs & Services | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)*](#)
 - [Strategic Economic and Community Development | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)



Underserved Markets and Inclusion in the Outdoors

1. [Recreation Management/Outdoor Recreation Industry](#). Current market trends in recreation participation.
2. [The Chattahoochee RiverLands Project](#). A 100-mile-long network of inclusive greenways, blueways, trails and parks, becoming the defining public space in the Atlanta area. The Trust for Public Land.
3. [The Adventure Crew](#). A Cincinnati-based organization connecting teens to the outdoors. The desire for a similar program was mentioned in Madison's and Maysville's workshop.
4. [Outdoors Alliance for Kids – Every Kid Outdoors Program](#). Partnership of 100+ organizations connecting kids to nature.
5. [ADA Standards](#)

Appendix A

The River Town Review Request and Planning Process

The River Town Review Team created the following outline of the Ohio River Recreation Trail, River Town Review request and planning process, including the facilitation of a virtual community input workshop.

The Request

- **River Town Review Request** – A river town community submits a letter to the Ohio River Recreation Trail Team requesting a River Town Review. Details about requesting assistance can be found at www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org. The river towns are selected for review based on criteria outlined on the website.
- **Community Participation Requirements** – If selected, the community agrees to provide a contact person, a list of key community members who would participate in the River Town Review workshop, a list of community assets, and a map identifying the location of recreation facilities. In addition, the community agrees to host a tour of the community with River Town Review Team members, and to promote and encourage participation in a community input virtual workshop.
- **Upon Selection** – The River Town Review Team will notify the community, work with them to schedule the virtual workshop and community visit and engage the community contact in the pre-workshop planning process.

Pre-Workshop Tasks

- **Desktop Online Review** – River Town Review Team volunteers will explore the community's internet presence and relevant tourism and outdoor recreation-related websites. They will perform a desktop online review as if they were planning a trip to the community, identifying outdoor recreation and related tourism opportunities, (activities, lodging, restaurants, entertainment venues, etc.). Team members will also conduct an online review of the community's current master plans. The volunteers will then prepare a summary of their observations and suggestions.
- **Community Visit and Assessment** – River Town Review Team members and volunteers will visit the community, assess recreation facilities, review pedestrian and bicycle opportunities, participate in a tour with local officials, and interview residents/visitors about community recreation assets. A summary of findings and suggestions will then be prepared.
- **Preparation for the Community Input Virtual Workshop** – River Town Review Team members will identify presenters, gather background information, and develop an agenda for the workshop.
- **Pre-workshop Review** – an online meeting will be held with community contacts to confirm workshop details and participants, and to identify and recruit additional participants, if necessary.

Workshop Tasks

- **The Community Input Virtual Workshop** – Due to covid travel restrictions, the River Town Review Team facilitates a virtual workshop to share their “fresh set of eyes”, objective observations, with the community, along with information gathered through the desktop online reviews and community visits. The workshop includes a PowerPoint presentation, open dialogue, and interactive online polling. The team starts by presenting opportunities for the community to partner with the Ohio River Recreation Trail and increase local business exposure by appearing on the trail’s award-winning Digital Guide. Similarly, workshop participants will be informed about the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience, and the opportunity for communities and local businesses to appear on the trail’s online, interactive map. Using “Mural” interactive software, the team will begin to gather community input and ideas through a SWOT Analysis, where participants generate and rank the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats present in their community. Participants are then asked to brainstorm and rank short-term and long-term ideas they feel would enhance recreation and tourism. This information is shared real-time during the workshop, and ultimately included as part of the community’s River Town Review.
- **Workshop Participants’ Homework** – Participants are asked to review the SWOT concerns identified and the complete list of ideas generated through the brainstorming session. They are asked to provide their top three short and long-term brainstorming session ideas. In addition, participants are asked to describe a “perfect day” for a visitor to their community. This information is returned to the River Town Review Team to be analyzed and used for the development of the Team’s recommendations.

Post Workshop Tasks

- **River Town Review Report Completed and Delivered** – The River Town Review Team will assemble and analyze all information collected from the desktop reviews, site visits, and community input, and ultimately prepare a summary of observations and recommendations, along with relevant resources. All the data collected, along with a comprehensive list of resources for each community, will be included in attached appendices. Upon completion, the report is sent to the community, and a time is scheduled for its review. In addition, the team will compile a summary report involving the information and knowledge gained through the development of all the river town reviews.
- **River Town Review Summit** – A Summit will be facilitated by the River Town Review Team, where the summary report will be reviewed and communities can share with each other, the challenges they face, the opportunities they have, and their solutions and successes. The value of strong partnerships between river towns will also be discussed and emphasized.

Appendix B

Madison's River Town Review Background & Supporting Materials

Appendix B contains the community's application letter, and all the data gathered through the Desktop Online Reviews and Community Visit. It also contains the Workshop Meeting Agenda, a list of participants, River Town Review Team contact information, all the data generated through the Workshop's SWOT Analysis and Brainstorming Session, and any other information collected during the River Town Review process.



River Town Review Team

A Collaboration of:

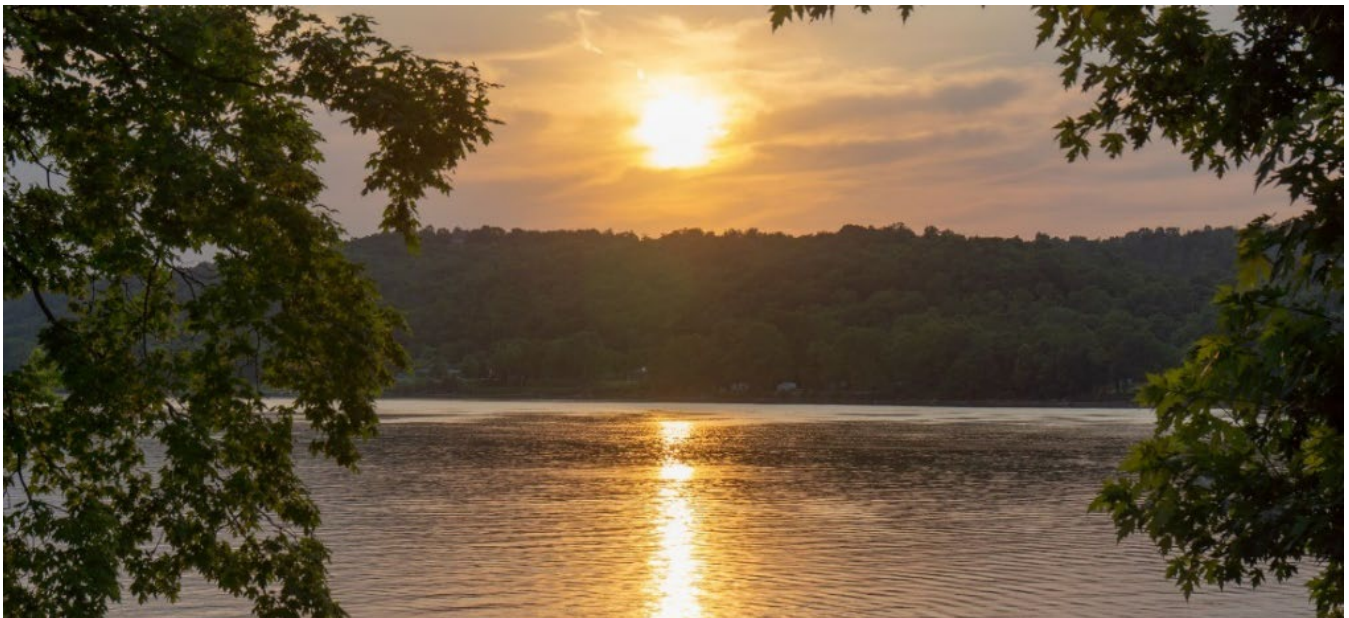
Ohio River Recreation Trail Partners
Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Experience
National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation
Assistance Program

Summary Report Prepared by:

Andrea Irland
Russell Clark
John Olivier
Michael Shilling
Megan Hedges
Alyssa Walker

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Application Letter

From: Austin Sims <austin@madisonmainstreet.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 9:36 AM
To: Russel_Clark@nps.gov; Irland, Andrea Irland <Andrea_Irland@nps.gov>
Cc: gschneider20@ivytech.edu; jack sutton <jsutton677@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Madison, IN. River Town Review

Good morning,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Madison area and our request to participate in the River Town review program. My name is Austin Sims and I am the Executive Director of the Madison Main Street Program. We strive to preserve, promote, and support business within our historic district. The Madison area would like to participate in this review to better understand our strengths and weaknesses with our riverfront, recreation, and it's impacts on our local tourism, education opportunities, and our economy. Madison annually hosts one of the oldest hydroplane boat races in the nation, we have the largest contiguous historic landmark district in the nation, and we believe we have the best river town/hometown in the nation! I am pleased to act as the main contact for this program and to communicate with other local programs and organizations. We are thrilled to provide any information needed and have gathered a strong group of stakeholders. Below is a list of our current interested parties:

- Madison Main Street Program
- Visit Madison, Inc.
- Historic Madison, Inc.
- Ivy Tech of Madison
- Hanover College
- Hanover Parks Department
- Riverfront Development Committee
- City Council Woman, Lucy Dattilo
- Madison Area Bike Club
- Movers of the Ohio Valley (Running Club)

Stakeholders who I have not gotten responses from, but plan to keep informed:

- Mayor Bob Courtney
- City of Madison Parks Department
- Jefferson County Historic Society
- Heritage Trail Conservancy
- Clifty Park
- Oak Heritage Conservancy

Please let me know if you need any additional information at this time. I have Greg Schneider CC'd to this email as well to act as a second chair for this program for the Madison area. Greg also represents Ivy Tech. Thank you all again for your consideration and we look forward to learning more. Happy Holidays!

Austin Sims

Executive Director | Madison Main Street Program

Phone: 812-274-0385

Office: 321 W Main St

Mailing: P.O. Box 327

Madison, IN 47250

www.madisonmainstreet.com





Digital Desktop Reviews

Four volunteers spent about one hour each on-line to see what they could find out about Madison as if they were thinking of visiting for a day or overnight – lodging, restaurants, breweries/wineries, historical sites, attractions, events, outdoor recreation opportunities, etc.



Team Review Summary, May 6, 2021

City of Madison (www.madison-in.gov)

The city government website has an attractive photo scroll on the homepage. The site navigation appeared easy to use and was generally directing the user to related city services. Under the “Community Tab” there are links to the Visit Madison Web site as well as information on outdoor recreation activities including boat ramps and docks on the Ohio River. There is also a link to Fizz’s Bike Shop to learn about bike rentals in Madison.

Overall impression – This is a government website more suited for use by locals to interact with their city government.

Visit Madison (www.visitmadison.org)

This website is very attractive and inviting. Great pictures of Ohio River, downtown Madison, and Clifty Falls State Park. The info on Rockin’ Thunder River Tours is unique. Certainly, a service that is not often found at other river towns on the Ohio

The section on “Cycling Routes” (Under the Explore Tab), is very impressive... very unique. This could be a model for the ORRT to follow. Well, Done!!!

Other key features included the Tab on fishing and boating as well as camping and hiking trails in the area. This website clearly tells the visitor that Madison is welcoming to folks who enjoy outdoor experiences!

Overall impression – This website is very well designed and visually appealing, giving the feeling that Madison is engaged and invested in luring visitors.

Madison Main Street (www.madisonmainstreet.com)

This site is also appealing and has lots of great info on things to do in the downtown district including dining, shopping, arts & recreation. Wonderful and engaging photos! We were glad see there are a couple of river related businesses identified– Ex; Madison Lighthouse Restaurant & Chillbilly Treats.

Social Media Platforms Visited included:

www.Yelp.com

www.Tripadvisor.com

Trip Advisor.com – Top 5 Things to do in Madison, IN:

1. Clifty Falls SP
2. Historic District
3. Lanier Mansion
4. Lanthier Winery
5. Mad Paddle Brewery

Yelp's 5 Best Places Near Madison

1. Clifty Falls SP
2. Red Pepperoni
3. Off Broadway Taproom
4. Hinkle's Sandwich Shop
5. The Red Rooster Coffee & Eatery

Overall Findings of Desktop Review – Suggestions to Consider

Overall, The Madison presence on digital media is well done. [Visit Madison \(www.visitmadison.org\)](http://www.visitmadison.org) appears to do a fantastic job on its web site as well as Facebook & Twitter. Great info on Things to Do, Outdoor Recreation, Food & Lodging.

Consider placing more emphasis on what visitors can do on or adjacent to the river in Madison. How can residents and visitors engage with the Ohio River? There are public boat launch facilities at Riverside Park, but only limited details on accessibility and facilities to accommodate both small craft and power boats.

Consider making hiking in the area more of an attraction. The Heritage Trail terminates at the river and traverses up the hill via an old railroad line. However, there is very little attention given to this recreational asset online.

Consider was to make it easier for out-of-town visitors to research the boat ramp (location, cost, parking, etc.), where canoe and kayak launches may be located on the Ohio River creeks/tributaries, and where to dock, get boat fuel, or bait/supplies.

Finally consider a robust social media campaign to generate more activity and attract more visitors to Madison. Perhaps Madison and Jefferson County could work with the Indiana Department of Tourism to boost the Ohio River corridor's visibility and attraction as a destination tourism site.

Individual Desktop Review Summary

Review the town's social media, websites, articles, and existing tourism information. Look for connections to the river and outdoor recreation. What are the highlights? Do any common themes emerge? Is there an experience to capture?

- Not much regarding river recreation, but their event site is nicely done.
- They have a beautiful heading picture on their home page of the Ohio River.
 - They include a link to their Outdoor Adventures page in the drop-down menu, but the only other place you can get to it is by scrolling halfway down their homepage.
 - I did not find their Outdoor Adventure page all that inviting or helpful. It only listed two places to spend time outdoors and only one of those was linked to more information.
 - I liked that they included social media posts that had tagged those parks on this page to show what people were saying about it and to involve more pictures. If it were not for those, I really would not have much of a desire to visit those outdoor places.
 - There does not seem to be a lot of outdoor promotion on their social media, even during the summer months.
 - The river was never mentioned as a place to see or spend time."
- Madison, IN has a presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest, but none of these social media sites is very robust. Most posts are outdated, and there is not much attention paid to the Ohio River. A new strategy for leveraging the positive impact of social media is needed. Southern Indiana, including Madison/Jefferson County received a READI grant in 2021, which will be used to make quality of place and destination tourism funding for the region including projects that access the Ohio River.
- "I visited the visitmadison.org web site and found it very attractive and inviting. Great pictures of Ohio River, downtown Madison, and Clifty Falls State Park. I was intrigued with the Rocking Thunder River Tours. I've not seen this activity featured by other Ohio River Towns.
- I was also very impressed by the Tab for Cycling Routes (Under the Explore Tab), This is very unique. Could be a model for the ORRT to follow. Well, Done!!!
- Other key features included the Tab on fishing and boating as well as camping.
- All of these features tell me that Madison is welcoming to folks who enjoy outdoor experiences!
- Also visited the madisonmainstreet.com web site. This site is also appealing and has lots of great info on things to do in the downtown district. Greta photos. Was glad to see there are a couple of river related businesses. Ex; Madison Lighthouse Restaurant.
- Also visited the City of Madison's web site. This site featured mostly government service info. I did find Fizz's bike shop listed under recreation.

If you were planning to visit there what would interest you from what you learned from your web search? Is it inviting? What is missing?

- Yes. Looks like a nice place with lots of amenities and lodging.
- A lot of the events/attractions/things to do listed on their website would interest me, but there were so few addresses listed that I would not be able to really plan a trip super well. I would have to do additional research to find out exactly where anything is.
- It has a lot of good information, but not everything I might want. For instance, on the Romantic Getaway page, it suggests booking a photoshoot with a local photographer. It would be helpful here to include contact information or links to websites to facilitate that.
- The pictures drew me in, the text did not necessarily do that. The text on each page should be exciting and helpful; I found it sounding like a blanket statement that didn't feel like it was trying to talk to the one person currently looking at the site. This is one detail I would appreciate a little more attention to.
- Madison, IN is a regional tourist destination. Madison and Jefferson County claim a rich historical and cultural legacy. The city features one of the most picturesque views of the Ohio River. Madison has one of the largest contiguous National Historic Landmark Districts in the U.S. The Chautauqua Festival of Art has drawn millions of people from across the Midwest since it was launched in 1972.
- Certainly, Clifty Falls would be interesting. Downtown Madison and its many food & beverage amenities; the riverfront park & cycling routes. I want to check these out. I did not see anything on paddle sports.

Look at their social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. How many followers? What is the most recent post? How often updated? Are there photos? Any events promoted? Are followers engaged?

- Facebook page isn't often updated and lacks a following. I don't see an Instagram page dedicated to the City of Madison.
- I like that they promote the #VisitMadisonIN in multiple places on their tourism site, and integrate their social media posts on their website
 - The most recent post on Facebook was from a few days ago, and it seems they post at least every few days
 - They include links to individual pages for events
 - Their posts include a lot of relevant pictures, pictures they take, not stock photos
 - I found their Facebook page very engaging and helpful!
 - Their Instagram seemed to have a list of weekend to-dos, and do not include everything that was also on Facebook. They could be missing out on reaching people that use Instagram more than Facebook to promote anything other than what to do over the weekend.
 - Their Twitter account does not seem to be as kept up-to-date. There are significantly fewer posts and none of them include things to do. I would not find this account very helpful.
- Madison, IN has 4,000 followers on Facebook, which is more than any of the other social media platforms. There is little content as it relates to Madison's relationship to the Ohio River.
- "Visit Madison Facebook 23,991 followers! Nice photos and good assortment of current events listed.
- Visit Madison Twitter -1155 followers- Most recent post was on December 15.

Visit the town's website. Does it make you want to visit there? What is missing from the view of a visitor?

- Yes, nice site.
- I like that the color scheme matches the hues of their homepage header, but they also don't clash with header pictures on other pages
 - The use of more pictures and fewer words is inviting
 - On their attractions page, it does not tell me where any of the attractions are, just information about their history. I would have to look up their location elsewhere if I wanted to actually visit them.
 - Their website did not feel very personal. The contact page included phone numbers and, email and a form to fill out, but I would not know who I was contacting. I would assume their tourism office, but not even that is stated. I would feel more comfortable reaching out if I had an idea of who I was conversing with.
- Madison, IN is one of my favorite tourist destinations. There is an abundance of festivals, events, historical and cultural sites, but the connection to the Ohio River seems to be missing.
- Also visited the City of Madison's web site. This site featured mostly government service info. I did find Fizzâ's bike shop listed under recreation. Other than that, this site seems to be focused on local resident needs and services. Which is ok. Might want to add hyperlinks to the Visit Madison web site, it not already there.

Look at crowdsourced sites for reviews (trip advisor, yelp, etc.). What is consistently reviewed well or makes the top ten list? What are the consistent negative comments from reviewers about the town?

- Clifty Falls. I didn't notice consistent negative comments, just sometimes a nature preserve, or historic place isn't everyone's cup of tea.
- The things to do were all consistently rated 4.5 or above, but among the rest of the categories, a 5-star rating was rare.
 - I could not find a negative reviews really, but nothing in the top 10 on Yelp was even rated 5 stars.
 - Clifty Falls had wonderful reviews, although there were some comments about the trails being difficult to hike and follow on a map.
- Yelp focuses on the great restaurant scene in Madison. Clifty Falls State Park gets the most reviews followed by Madison's outstanding restaurants.
- "Trip Advisor.com Top 5 Things to do in Madison, IN:
 - Clifty Falls SP
 - Historic District
 - Lanier Mansion
 - Lanthier Winery
 - Mad Paddle Brewery
- Yelp's 5 Best Places Near Madison
 - Clifty Falls SP
 - Red Pepperoni
 - Off Broadway Taproom
 - Hinkle's Sandwich Shop

- The Red Rooster Coffee & Eatery

Did you find much information about outdoor recreation? Hiking, Fishing, Paddlesports, Power boats, sailing or bicycling. If so describe, if not do you have recommendations for Madison to consider?

- Not much. They have a hiking trail along the river, but that's all I see.
- General information regarding outdoor recreation, but not much information on paddlesports, power boats, sailing or bicycling. Provide more information on outdoor recreation opportunities in Madison, particularly as it relates to riverfront recreation.
- There is lots of references to camping and hiking at Clifty Falls SP. There was some info on fishing and boating on the Ohio River including marina and boat ramps. Some info on cycling in and around Madison. I did not see much info on paddle sports.
- They have a hiking trail along the river, but that's all I see.

What advice would you have for the town about how to better communicate and coordinate their assets, rich history, key annual events, lodging and dining options, tips on what to do there, etc.?

- Maybe more focus on active recreation such as paddling, hiking, etc.
- The month view of the events page is difficult to read, making it difficult to see ahead when planning a trip
 - Including a search bar on their website could help users quickly find the information they want without having to click through menus and pages.
 - I would try to make communication through social media consistent. Sometimes I check one account more than others, or don't have one at all, so it would be good to have all the relevant information on all platforms.
 - The tab throws me off. It makes me think of Things to do, but it is more about a themed trip, or trips for specific groups of people. The list of things to do is under the Explore tab. I would list this tab first as I think it would be the most helpful to the most visitors.
- More information on the website and social media platforms needs to be provided on how residents and visitors can engage with the Ohio River. There are public boat launch facilities at Riverside Park, but no details on accessibility and facilities to accommodate both small craft and power boats.
- "The Madison presence on digital media is excellent!!! Visit Madison appears to do a fantastic job on its web site as well as Facebook & Twitter. Great info on Things to Do, Outdoor Recreation, food & lodging.
- In many ways, this group (Visitmadison.com) could be an example for other river towns to follow. Congrats!!!



Community Visit Photos



Photo Credit: Jack Sutton



Visitor Assessments

Several members of RTR Team visited Madison to experience the community. Some of the members also have paddled the rivers to experience the local recreation resources. The following documents are the summaries of individual RTR Team members visits.

Purpose

The River Town Review Visitor Assessment is a "fresh set of eyes" taking an objective look at your existing conditions and asset inventory as a visitor would see it in relation to the Ohio River Recreation Trail and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Visitor Assessment Summary, January 4, 2022

11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Weather – Sunny and cool – 35 degrees!

River Connections & Access

- Madison is a charming historic river town. The heart of its downtown is Main Street with shops and businesses just a short walk from the Ohio River and the beautiful park areas along W Vaughn Drive and the river. With just three blocks to cover, the connection between the river and the business district is an easy 5-minute walk.
- Our early January visit was crisp and refreshing. The Ohio River was rising and so, we could not see the details on the on-river amenities. The parks areas were generally clean and welcoming. Numerous individuals were enjoying the walking path along the river.
- The area along W Vaughn Drive includes over a mile of paved walkway parallel to the river with an abundance of benches and interpretive signage for visitors to enjoy. There is a gazebo shelter and river overlook at Lamplighter Park. The area also includes a floating restaurant called Rivercrest Lighthouse Restaurant and Lounge as well as the loading point for Rockin' Thunder River Tours. This area is also the center point for the annual 4th of July Madison Regatta hydroplane races.
- Also along W Vaughn Drive is a public swimming pool, basketball courts, baseball field, amphitheater, public restrooms, and playground equipment. The swimming pool facility includes the Crystal Beach pool house, a

historic structure built in 1938 by the Work Progress Administration (WPA). Another unique asset of this river front area is Chillbilly Treats ice cream shop which is only open seasonally.

- From a transient boater or paddlers' point of view, access from the river to the park and downtown appears straight forward. There is a wayfinding map kiosk located at the corner of W Vaugh Drive and West Street providing quick information about downtown Madison.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

- Downtown Madison is very walkable. There is a full complement of sidewalks along the streets and the crosswalks, ADA curb cuts, and site amenities are clean, safe, and inviting. Main Street has extra-wide sidewalks with interpretive signage and trash receptacles. The historic buildings and streetscape certainly create a quintessential vibe to the downtown.
- Most of the downtown Madison has slow moving traffic, making bicycling on the streets a relatively comfortable experience for most bike riders. Main Street does include designated bike lanes. However, we did not see additional bike support facilities such as signage for bike lanes or bike racks. Fizz's Bike Shop on West Street does display a sign stating it offers bike rentals.

Signage, Wayfinding and Site Amenities

- Overall signage in the downtown area is consistent and not overbearing – no sign clutter. There are road signs indicating The Scenic Byway auto tour route on SR 56. We did see wayfinding type signage along SR 421 & Main Street identifying the Historic District, West End Shopping area, Visitor Center and Riverfront.
- Streetscape amenities along Main Street such as streetlights, signposts, utility poles, flag holders and event banners were tasteful and in relatively good condition. Some signage near the river was showing age and looked "tired". Overall, much of the site amenities were showing some age and will likely need to be upgraded in the next 5-10 years.
- One unique aspect about downtown Madison and its riverfront parks is its interpretive signage. There is a plethora of fun facts, signage, markers, and plaques highlighting the historical aspect of the community including river history, businesses, and local families. Another quiet surprise are the metal utility cabinets (usually steel gray color) have been painted with colorful murals. Very unique!

Parking

- There is ample parking in the downtown area including off street parking.

Overall Observations and Suggestions

Madison leaders should be proud of their town and its amenities. The business district is charming, and the parks along the riverfront are an outstanding asset for the community. Opportunities and ideas to consider include:

- Consider placing more emphasis on what visitors can do on the river in Madison.
 - Include signage that the boat ramps can be used by canoe and kayakers. If they are not, consider paddle friendly access facilities.
 - Encourage or investigate having a vendor(s) to rent canoes and kayaks seasonally
 - Promote the river for outdoor adventure recreation
- Consider placing more emphasis on bicycling in and around Madison:
 - Providing bike racks
 - Providing signage for bike lanes and share the road infrastructure
 - Promote cycling routes that are displayed on the visitmadison.com website.
- Plan for future repairs and upgrades to the parks along W Vaughn Drive.
 - Shelters, benches, and site amenities all have an expected life cycle. Be prepared to reinvest in this wonderful infrastructure
- Consider ways to enhance the Heritage Trail
 - Make it better known
 - Consider making it a multi-propose, ADA accessible, trail from the riverfront to top of hill
 - Promote it as part of American Discovery Trail
- Promote other walking routes or walking tours or scavenger hunts





Community Meeting Agenda

RIVER TOWN REVIEW

Madison, IN

January 18, 2022

Agenda

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2:00 – 2:10 | Welcome |
| 2:10 – 2:25 | Big Picture <i>Ohio River/ORRT/LECL</i> <i>RTR process</i> <i>LECL Geotourism Site & ORRT Digital Guide</i> |
| 2:25 – 3:00 | Tell us about your town (SWOT Analysis) <i>Strengths</i> <i>Weaknesses</i> <i>Opportunities</i> <i>Threats</i> |
| 3:00 – 3:10 | What we learned – DTR & Site Visit |
| 3:10 – 3:40 | Brainstorming Ideas |
| 3:40 – 3:50 | Human Nature (Consultants) |
| 3:50 – 4:00 | Questions, Wrap up, Next Steps |



List of Participants

Community Participants

| Name | Email | Organization |
|-----------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Austin Sims | austin@madisonmainstreet.com | Madison Main Street Program |
| Jim Olson | jim@betterroadsandgardens.com | Active Local/ Heritage Trail Board |
| Jess Spiess | programs@historicmadison.com | Historic Madison Programs Director |
| Sarah Prasil | sarah@visitmadison.org | Visit Madison Marketing Director |
| JD Webster | John.Webster@dnv.com | Riverfront Development |
| Greg Schneider | gschneider20@ivytech.edu | Ivy Tech |
| Bob Canida | bob@canidadentistry.com | bike club/HMI/active local |
| Hannah Schaffer | hannah@visitmadison.org | Visit Madison Marketing Specialist |
| Kate Johnson | johnsonk@hanover.edu | Oak Heritage Conservancy |
| Chad Ison | parks2@madison-in.gov | Madison Parks Department |
| Carolyn Alcorn | ? | Madison Resident |
| Stacy Crawley | mchsswim@yahoo.com | Bike & Run Club representative |

Team Participants

Brewster Rhoads: brewohio@gmail.com

Jack Sutton: jsutton677@gmail.com

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Russell Clark: Russell_Clark@nps.gov

Michael Schilling: Michael_Schilling@nps.gov

John Olivier: jolivierfalls@gmail.com

Chriss Maning: cmanning@humannature.cc

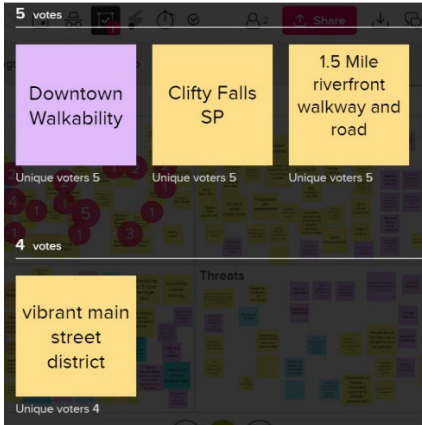
Sara DiLandro: sdilandro@humannature.cc

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats – Continued

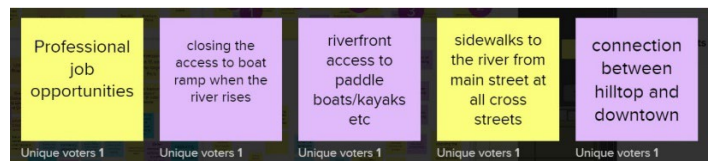
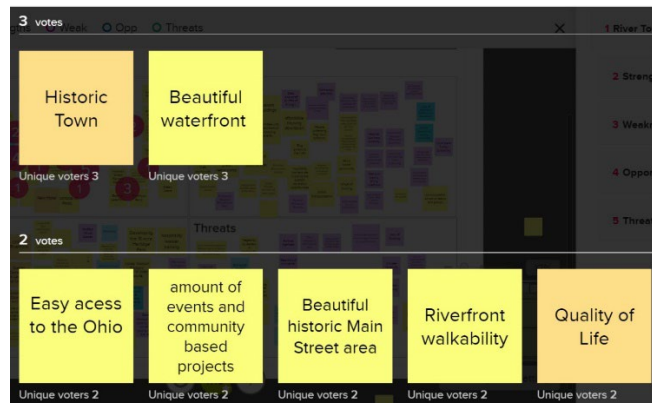
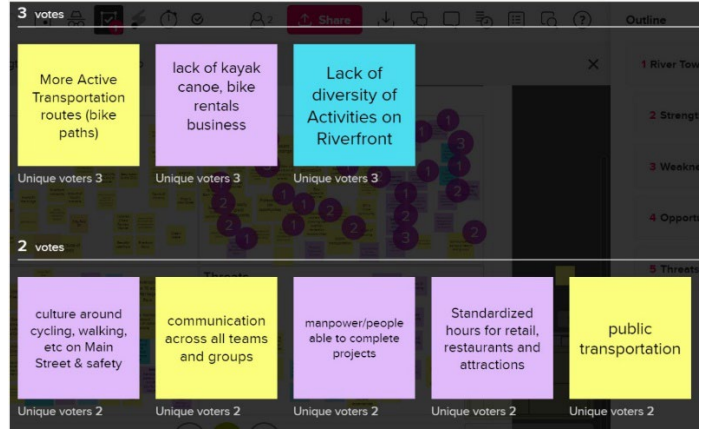
| Madison, IN SWOT Analysis Results 1/18/22 | |
|--|---|
| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
| Downtown Walkability | Expand State Park Utilization (Cabins, horseback riding) |
| Riverfront walkability | Kid-friendly activities |
| 1.5 Mile riverfront walkway and road | Data Analyst of all data of all org's. |
| Beautiful waterfront | closing the access to boat ramp when the river rises |
| Riverfront Parks | connection between cliffy, riverfront, dt businesses |
| Multitude of Parks | culture around cycling, walking, etc on Main Street & safety |
| Green-space | vacant buildings |
| Indiana's Oldest Farmers Market | manpower/people able to complete projects |
| trail to Clifty Falls and to Hanover | financial resources |
| the Madison campground | no shoulders for biking on roads |
| transient dockage | Lack of diversity of Activities on Riverfront |
| Next Level Trails (NLT) Project - Connecting Madison to Hanover thru Clifty Falls SP | CTA's Certified Tourism Ambassadors |
| New Bridge with pedestrian walkway | National marketing |
| Clifty Falls SP | affordable housing downtown |
| active bike,running, swimming groups | sidewalks to the river from main street at all cross streets |
| the amount of locally owned businesses | Limited physical land space (boxed-in by hills) |
| great bars and restaurants | Committee with leaders from all fundraising events |
| Hanover College & Ivy Tech | Visitor Experience during weekdays |
| amount of industry available | Inconsistent marketing |
| New Hotel | need for business diversity |
| vibrant main street district | connection between hilltop and downtown |
| history of being a place to visit | lack of connectivity of bike trails with rivertowns up and down the river |
| Architecture | Employee resources |
| Architecture | Consistent Trolley Availability |
| largest contiguous National Landmark Historic District In U.S. | River Bank Park |
| Historic buildings | Easy access to the river. |
| Historic Town | Standardized hours for retail, restaurants and attractions |
| History | riverfront access to paddle boats/kayaks etc |
| significant historical buildings | events that work with the entire community |
| Beautiful historic Main Street area | Professional job opportunities |
| proximity to 3 metro areas | no really great restaurants |
| easy access from the river to restaurants and lodging | Still a "niche" community |
| access to the bridge | Paddle Craft Launch site |
| Easy access to the Ohio | Outdoor Equipment retailer |
| safety and comfort | Respect, tolerance for competing concepts |
| Community Involvement | hospitality workers not knowing the outdoor recreation opportunities |
| Volunteerism Spirit | House boats that could be rented as an Air B and B |
| Quality of Place | litter and debris along riverfront |
| Sense of vibrancy | range of housing |
| Madison's residents | town/county divide |
| Preserved small town feel | campground facilities close to the Ohio |
| Quality of Life | family friendly activities all year round |
| Great Community Spirit and Involvement in Improving the Community | public transportation |
| amazing special events | communication across all teams and groups |
| Clever ideas for engaging the public in the downtown space | local buy-in for support |
| amount of events and community based projects | lack of kayak canoe, bike rentals business |
| | Permanent Stage at Bicentennial Park |
| | Festival Follow-up/Survey's |

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats – Continued

Polling Results – Strengths



Polling Results - Weaknesses



Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats – Continued

| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|--|--|
| create Golf Cart community board | manpower/people and energy needed to move forward |
| hospitality worker training | Lack of Funding |
| CRM system that talks to all data sources | Lack of funds to expand |
| Remote Working - Trend! | Economic Uncertainty |
| Recruitment | the campground is a bit noisy at times |
| support for growing young professionals to lead some these ideas in the community | infighting amongst teams and groups |
| Grocery store in downtown | Negativity by leaders in community |
| Rentals, etc | Political Agendas |
| Connect the cities to the rest of the county | Retention of companies |
| capturing unique traveler data | lack of understanding of current organizations and what they do |
| Better signage and recognition of travel items | Businesses & Residents not complying with COVID Safety |
| Restaurants on the Riverfront | Climate Variability |
| Rooftop Venue Spaces | Ecological Impact |
| recruit outdoor gear shop | Litter and trash in the river and in our community |
| Outdoor Adventure Store | the perception that the river is dangerous and too polluted |
| Outdoor Recreation Retailer (Downtown) | Managing River Debris after flooding |
| More Bike amenities | Ohio River - Image/Sanitary |
| fishing pier | young people leaving the area |
| campground along the Ohio | Neighboring communities with similar opportunities |
| Use history of river in more tours | Other festivals in the regional area |
| City Owned Pontoon Boat for tours and education | expensive-exclusive things) |
| River Bank Park | Lack of knowledge related to all things Madison |
| Unique Riverfront | hospitality workers not knowing the outdoor recreation opportunities |
| Madison Railroad Tourism (Dinner Train, etc.) | town isolated from wider county |
| madson Recreational center | becoming primarily a retirement community |
| Paddle Craft "Rest Area" along the Ohio River | Perceived |
| working with Ivy tech and public schools to enhance local commitment to the river | businesses vs hobbies - consistent customer & traveler experiences |
| Preservation Connections In General | |
| Kid friendly attractions | |
| children activities | |
| young families looking for activities | |
| Advertising and Marketing | |
| Create "Madison Outdoors" section of visitor's website | |
| Designated Bike Paths | |
| Regional multi-use trails connecting Madison to Cincinnati, Louisville, etc | |
| continue to take advantage of walking and biking trails | |
| Bike trail to Vevay and Hanover, eventually connecting to Cincy and Louisville | |
| Greater Connections to Louisville and Cincinnati | |
| Regional | |
| Louisville, Cincinnati and Indy nearby | |
| Unified App for Travelers | |
| the clifty falls power plant, what happens when it closes | |
| Connection to Preservation Trades and Instruction | |
| COVID "boomerangs" people moving back to Madison | |
| organize annual paddling/biking event | |
| Better transportation options in and out of the county (train, bus, Even more music on the river #IndiansMusicCity | |
| New watersport related business opportunities ie kayaking, paddleboarding etc | |
| More public transportation opportunities to those visiting from boats etc. | |
| Continue to enhance music scene | |
| Aquatic Center | |
| development of Indian creek | |
| Community Asset Manager- work with all | |
| Ohio River Activity Office/Visitors center | |

Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities & Threats – Continued

Polling Results –Opportunities

Polling Results –Threats

3 votes

- Regional multi-use trails connecting Madison to Cincinnati, Louisville, etc (Unique voters 3)
- Create "Madison Outdoors" section of visitor's website (Unique voters 3)
- Bike trail to Vevey and Hanover, eventually connecting to Cincy and Louisville (Unique voters 3)
- recruit outdoor gear shop (Unique voters 3)

6 votes

Threats

- the perception that the river is dangerous and too polluted (Unique voters 6)

Weaknesses

4 votes

- businesses vs hobbies - consistent customer & traveler experiences (Unique voters 4)
- manpower/people and energy needed to move forward (Unique voters 4)
- young people leaving the area (Unique voters 4)

2 votes

- More Hotels - lead to more convention & other (Unique voters 2)
- the clifty falls power plant, what happens when it closes (Unique voters 2)
- Madison Railroad Tourism (Dinner Train, etc.) (Unique voters 2)
- City Owned Pontoon Boat for tours and education (Unique voters 2)
- New watersport related business opportunities ie kayaking, paddleboarding etc (Unique voters 2)
- Greater Connections to Louisville and Cincinnati (Unique voters 2)
- Outdoor Adventure Store (Unique voters 2)
- children activities (Unique voters 1)

3 votes

- becoming primarily a retirement community (Unique voters 3)
- Political Agendas (Unique voters 3)

1 vote

- Developing the 15 acre Heritage Park (Unique voters 1)
- River Bank Park (Unique voters 1)
- Continue to enhance music scen (Unique voters 1)
- Restaurants on the Riverfront (Unique voters 1)
- fishing pier (Unique voters 1)
- CRM system that talks to all data sources (Unique voters 1)
- Regional Advertising and Marketing (Unique voters 1)
- COVID "boomerangs" people moving back to Madison (Unique voters 1)
- Aquatic Center (Unique voters 1)
- Better transportation options in and out of the county (train, bus, etc.) (Unique voters 1)

2 votes

- Perceived Ohio River - Image/Sanitary (Unique voters 2)
- Over commercialization of Madison (too much Drivng World or overly expensive - exclusive things) (Unique voters 2)
- town isolated from wider county (Unique voters 2)
- Climate Variability (Unique voters 2)
- hospitality workers not knowing the outdoor recreation opportunities (Unique voters 2)
- Negativity by leaders in community (Unique voters 2)

Ohio River Activity Office/visitors center Rentals, etc (Unique voters 1)

hospitality worker training (Unique voters 1)

working with Ivy tech and public schools to enhance local commitment to the river (Unique voters 1)

Even more music on the river #IndianaMusicCity (Unique voters 1)

Designated Bike Paths (Unique voters 1)

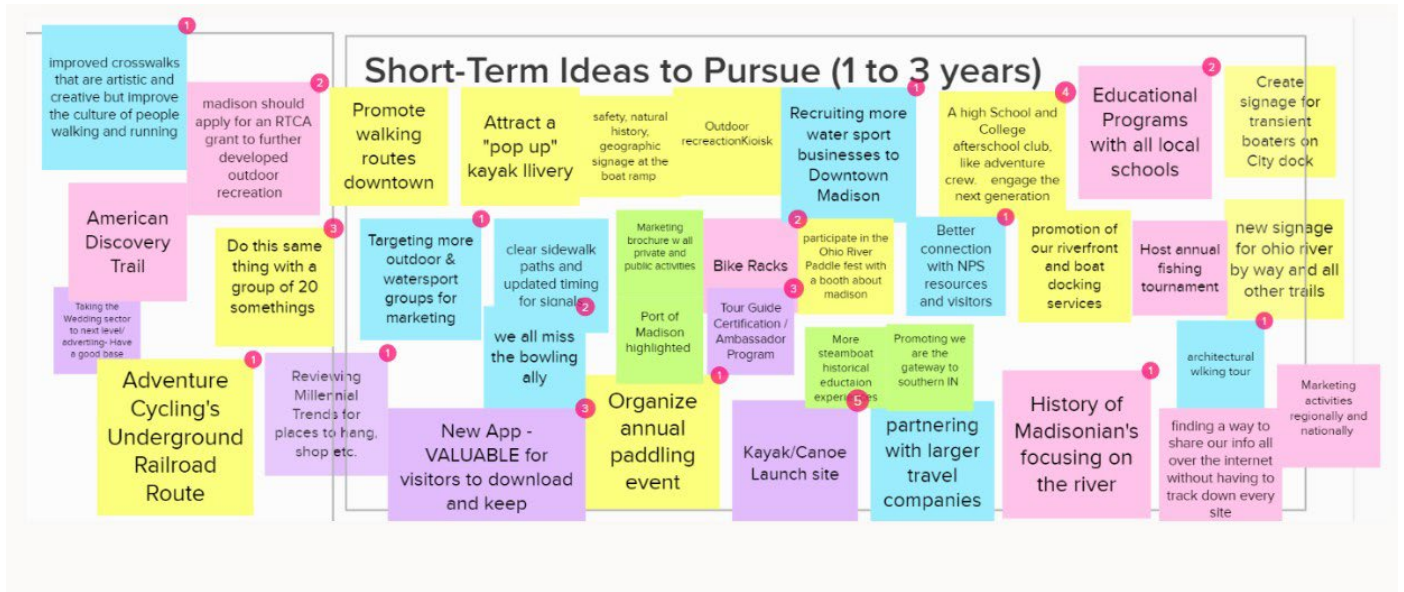
madison Recreational center (Unique voters 1)

Grocery store in downtown (Unique voters 1)

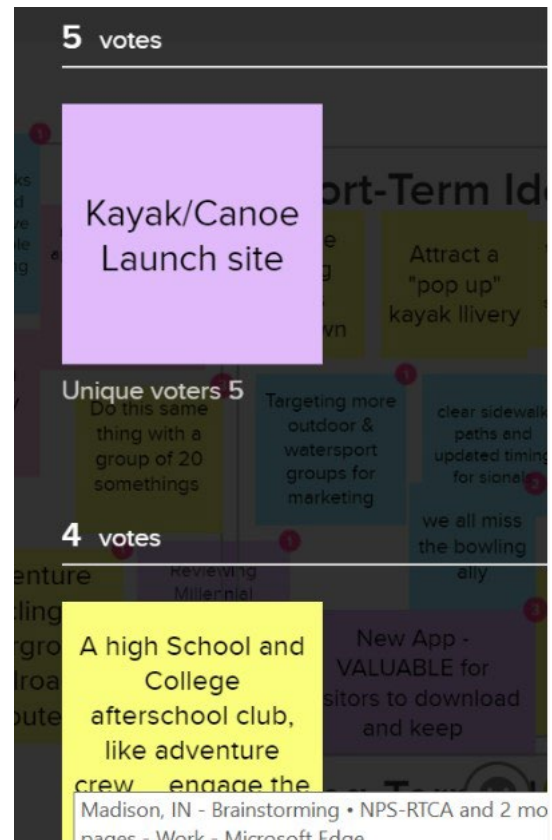
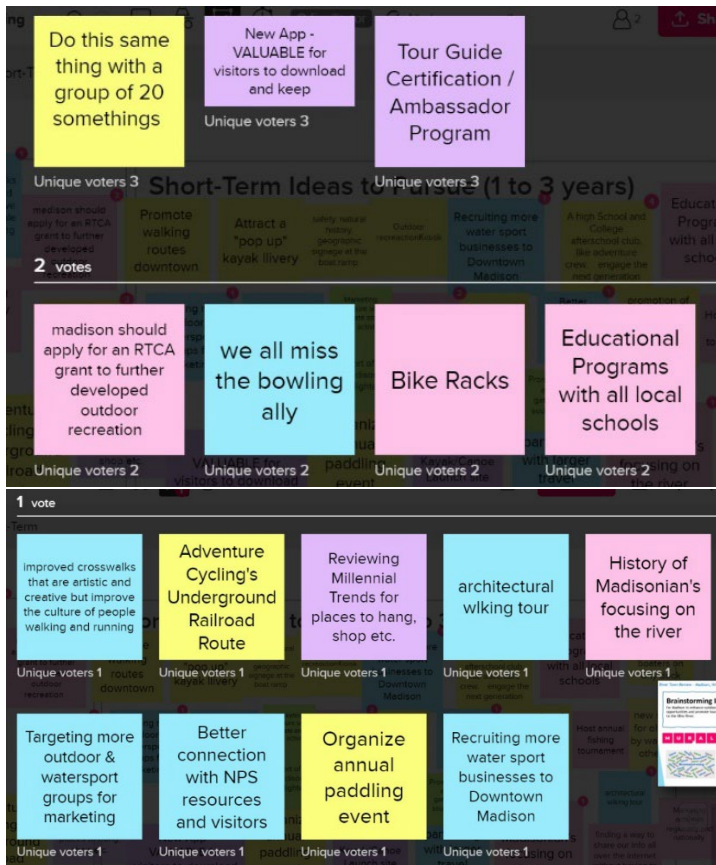
1 vote

- Litter and trash in the river and in our community (Unique voters 1)
- Economic Uncertainty (Unique voters 1)
- Retention of companies (Unique voters 1)
- Lack of Funding (Unique voters 1)
- Infighting amongst teams and groups (Unique voters 1)
- lack of understanding of current organizations and what they do (Unique voters 1)
- Lack of understanding of what's been done and repeating the failures (Unique voters 1)
- Managing River Debris after flooding (Unique voters 1)

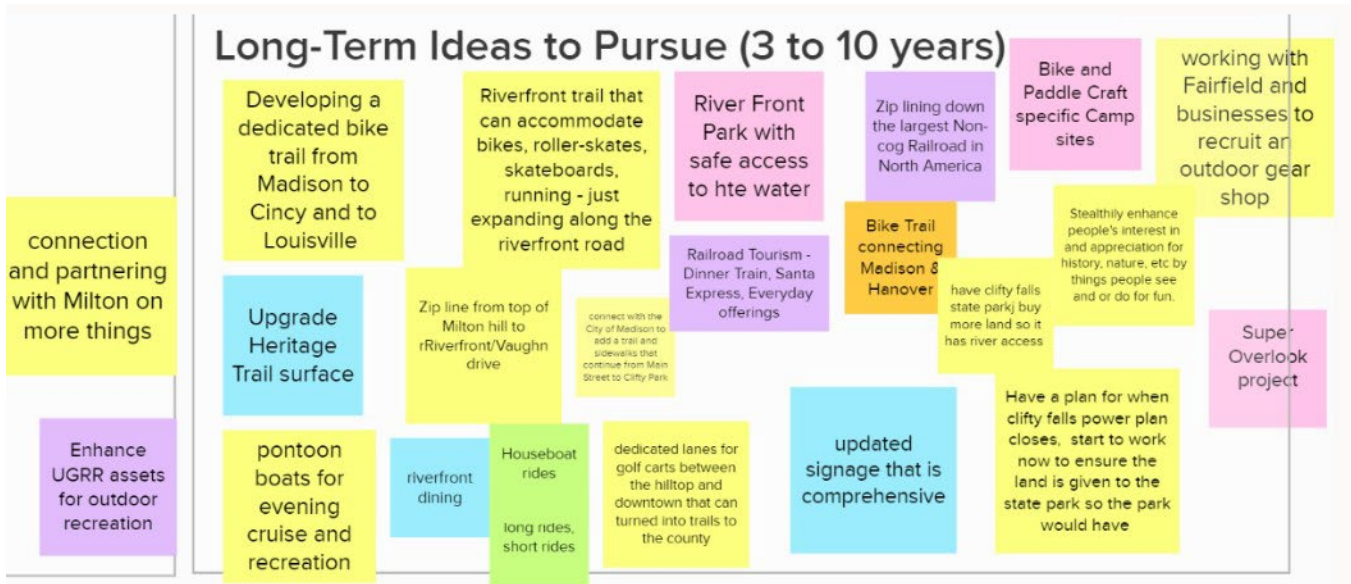
Brainstorming Ideas – Continued



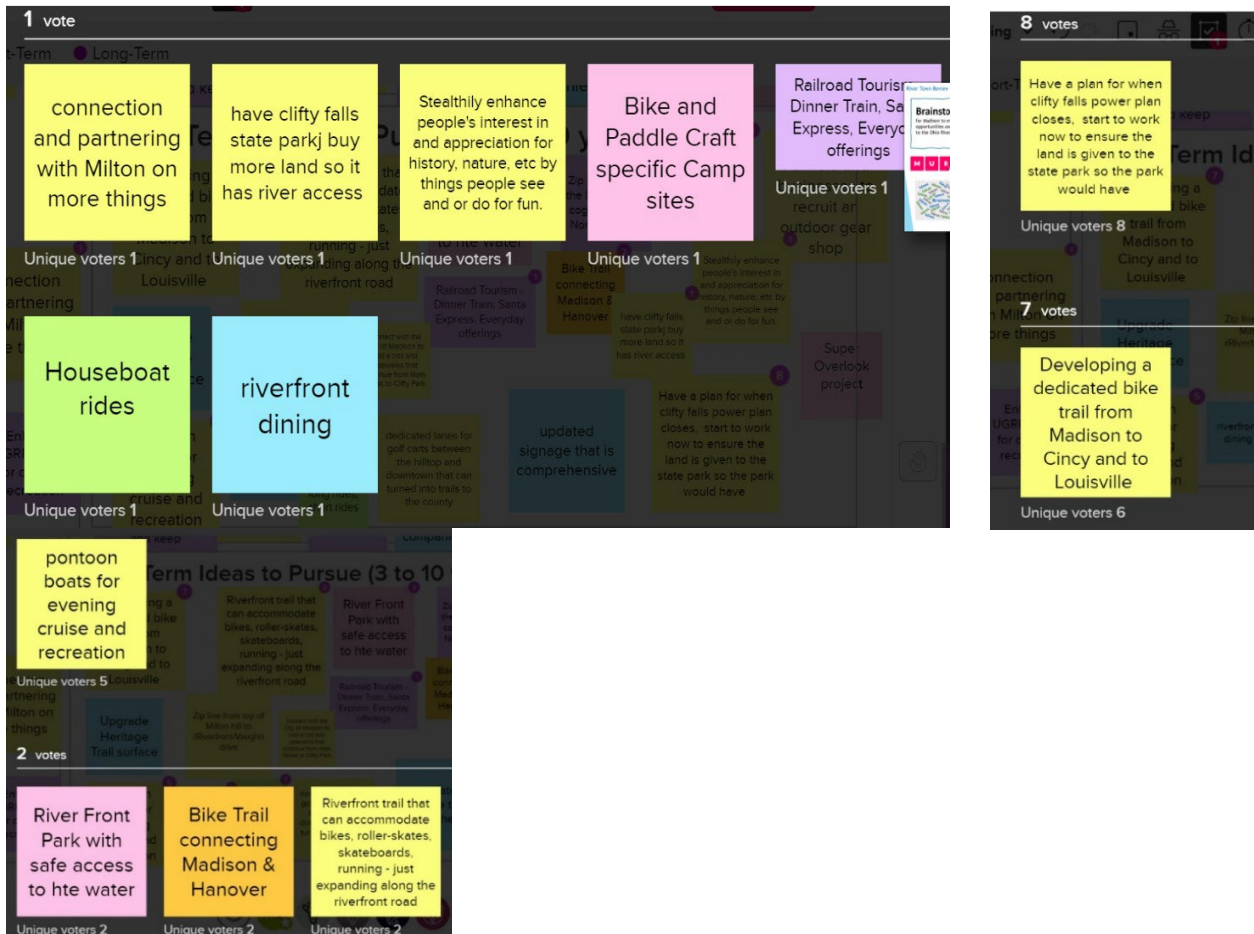
Polling Results to Prioritize Short-term Ideas for Madison



Brainstorming Ideas – Continued



Polling Results to Prioritize Short-term Ideas for Madison





Comments

The workshop participants were asked to provide their thoughts on the following questions in the chat box at the end of the zoom meeting:

- We invite YOU to look at your town with fresh eyes!
- Describe a perfect day for a visitor in your community
- What other contacts or organizations could be valuable partners?

A Perfect Day (describe a perfect day for a visitor in your community)

A perfect day in Madison starts at one of our local cafes followed by a walk along the riverfront with my dogs and my family. Pet-friendly activities are a huge draw and interest demographic we have analyzed

Perfect Day in Town: Wake up and get breakfast, flowers, and coffee at the Farmers Market. Attend a local tour like the bi-annual Loft Tour or historic sites. Grab lunch at a local pub, Finish the tours and visit the fireman's point at Clifty Park. Wrap up the day with a free live concert and music at a local venue or relax on the boat on the river and watch the sun set!

An ideal day in Madison would be having breakfast in town, then head to my kayak and paddle on down to Payne Hollow and check out the historic property of Harlan and Anna Hubbard. (With permission)

Walk around and explore some history and make connections. River walk. Breakfast!! coffee and a good place for a beer. Rent a bike?

A Perfect way to a Perfect day in Madison can be found on our NEW itineraries on our website.
www.VisitMadison.org/do

Daytime: favorite activity (such as outdoor rec, shopping, historic touring, etc.); Evening: Dining at restaurant or campground; Later Evening: concert, show, etc. at one of our venues.

Visit the Madison Arts Alliance & Madison Mural

Who Should be here? (Other valuable community partners)

Madison Travel Company, Lighthouse Restaurant and Marina, Fizz Bike Shop, Fairfield Inn, Clifty Park, more City of Madison Folks, hilltop industry who may be able to invest in some of these ideas

MTC, Madison Area Chamber, Madison Arts Alliance, local boat clubs, Madison Regatta board, more local schools

Jan Vetrhus would be a great person to get involved in regard to the Underground Railroad. She is a community partner on a lot of levels, has deep knowledge of the UGRR.



Contacts

Organization Websites

Ohio River Recreation Trail

<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/>

ORRT Digital Guide

<https://www.ohioriverrecreationtrail.org/digital>

Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Experience

<https://lewisandclark.travel/>

NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

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